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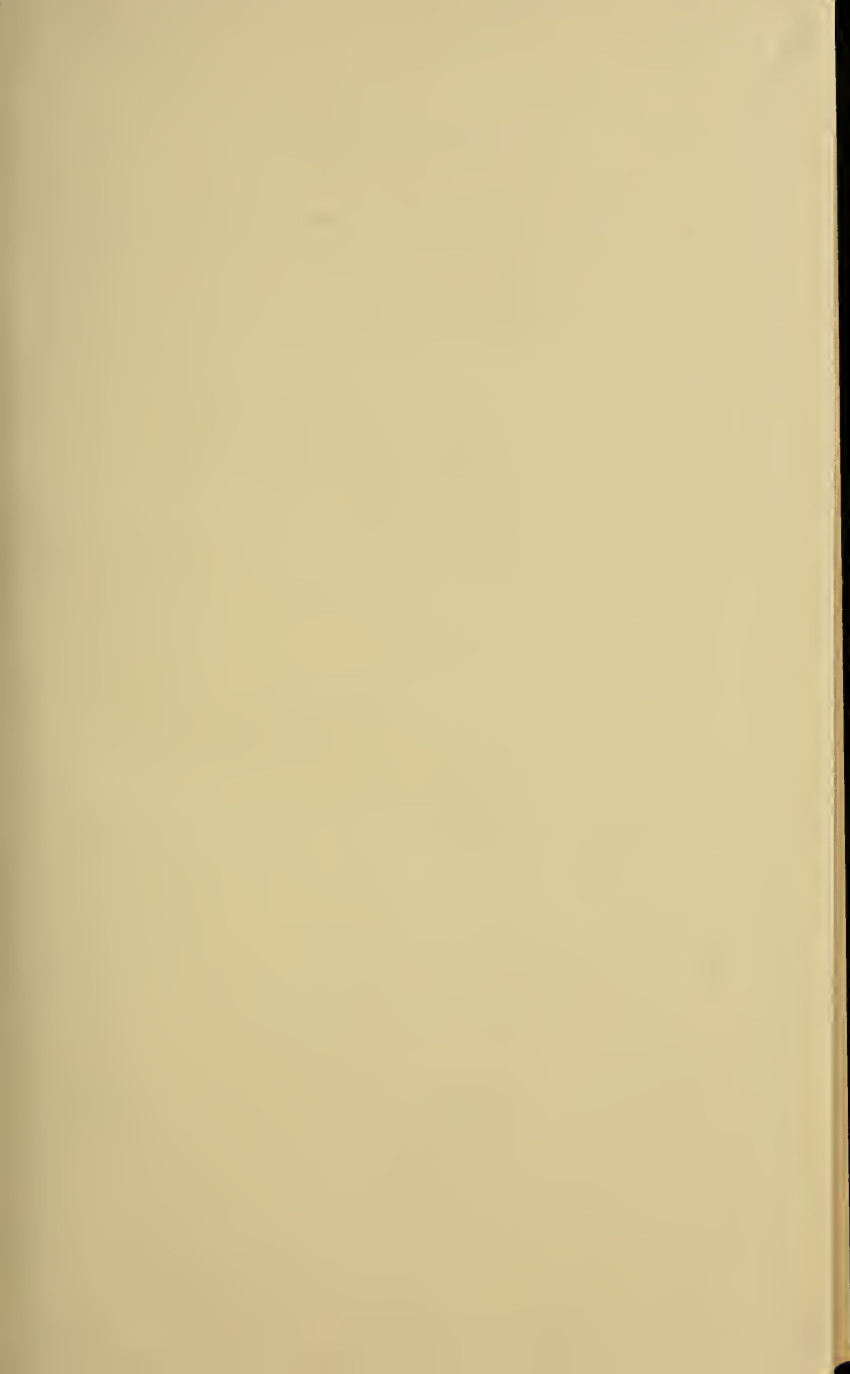
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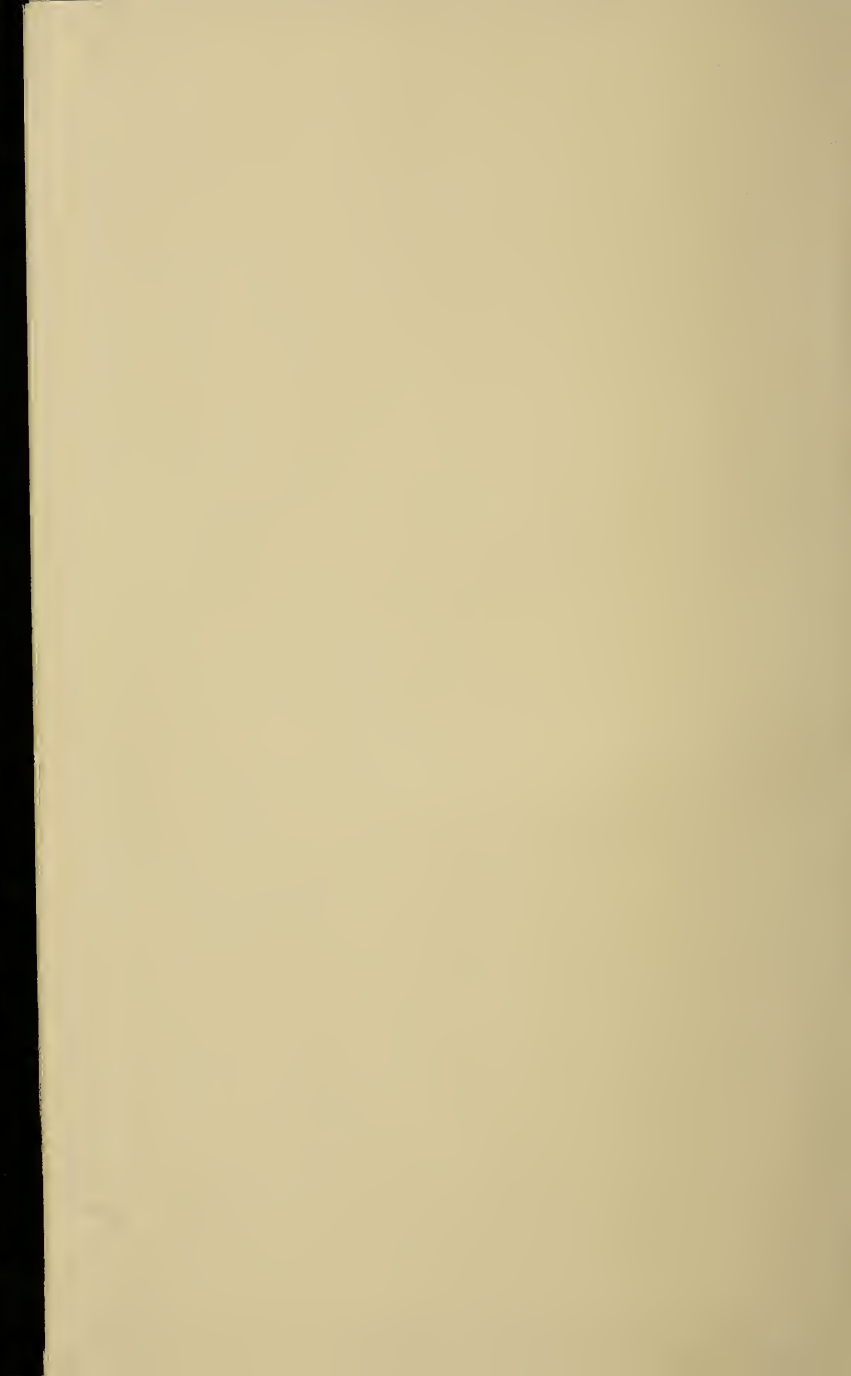
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Appletons' Home Books.

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# HOME AMUSEMENTS.

BY *Mary F. G. Galt*  
*W. S. Sherwood*  
M. E. W. S.

AUTHOR OF "AMENITIES OF HOME," ETC.

"There be some sports are painful; and their labour  
Delight in them sets off."

"Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves;  
And ye that on the sands with printless foot  
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him,  
When he comes back!"

I do invoke ye all.

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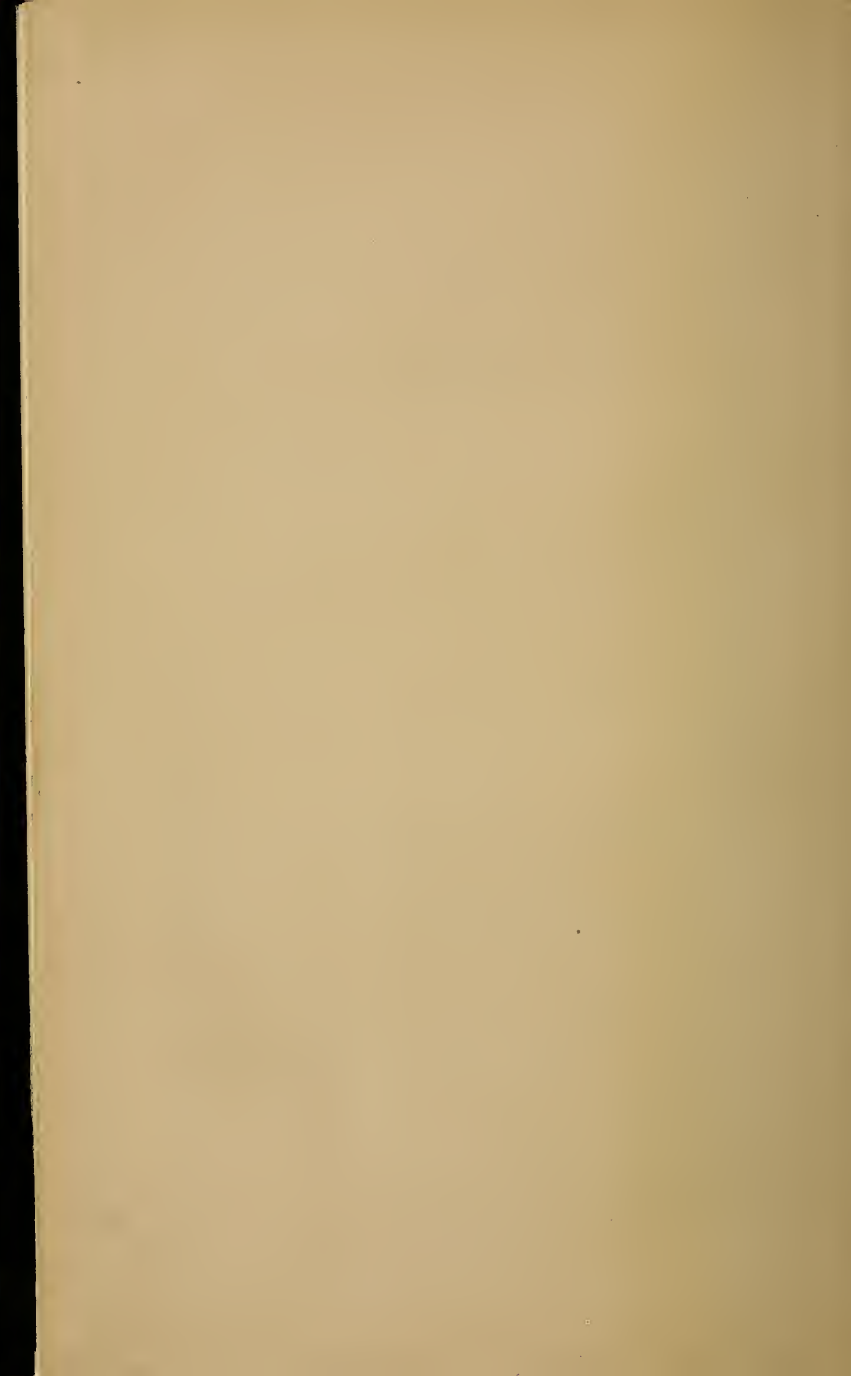
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May 27, 1929

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# HOME AMUSEMENTS.

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## I.

### PREFATORY.

GOETHE, in "Wilhelm Meister," struck the key-note of the universal underlying dramatic instinct. The boy begins to play the drama of life with his puppets, and afterward exploits the wild dreams of youth in the company of the strolling players. We are, indeed, all actors. We all know how early the strutting soldier-instinct crops out, and how soon the little girl assumes the cares of the amateur nursery.

"I have learned from neighbor Nelly  
What the girl's doll-instinct means."

We begin early to play at living, until Life becomes too strong for us, and, seizing us in merciless and severe grip, returns our condescension by making of us the puppets with which the passing tragedy or comedy is presented. With this idea in mind we have begun our little book with the play in the garret—the humblest attempt at histrionics—and so going on, still endeavoring to help those more ambitious artists who, in remote and secluded spots, may essay to amuse themselves and others by attempting the

*rôle* of a Cushman, a Wallack, a Sothern, a Booth, or a Gilbert.

Our subsequent task has been a more difficult one. To tell people how to give all sorts of entertainments—in fact, to tell our intelligent people how to do anything—is nearly as foolish a practice as to carry coals to Newcastle, and implies that sort of conceit which Thackeray so wittily suggests when, in his “*Rebecca and Rowena*,” he presents the picture of a little imp painting the lily. It is hard to know where to draw the line. It would be delightful to amuse—to help along with the great business of making home happy—to tell a mother what to do with her active young brood, and yet to avoid that dreadful bore of mentioning to her something which she already knows a great deal better than we do.

The Scylla of barrenness and the Charybdis of garrulity are before any author who tries to speak upon a familiar theme. Let us hope that, through the kindness of our readers, we may not have wrecked our little bark on either.

## II.

### THE GARRET.

HAPPY the children who have inherited a garret ! We mean the good old country garret, wherein have been stowed away the accumulations of many generations of careful housewives. The more worthless these accumulations, the better for the children. An old aunt who saved all the old bonnets, an old uncle who had a wardrobe of cast-off garments to which he had appended the legend,

“ Too poor to wear, too good to give away—”

these are the purveyors to the histrionic talents of nations yet unborn. Old garrets are really the factories of History, Poetry, and the Drama.

Into such a garret crept the lame little Walter Scott, and what did he not bring out of it ! Talk of the lumber of a garret and the accumulations of a house, and you mention to the thoughtful the gold and diamond mines of a future literature. A bright boy or girl will unearth many a pearl of price from those old trunks, those dilapidated bureau-drawers, those piles of old love-letters, those garments of the past, that broken-down guitar, that stringless violin, that too-reedy flute. The taste for old furniture has rather emptied the garret of its time-honored chairs and old clocks, but there is still in its ghost-haunted corners quite enough goblin tapestry for the fancy of the growing child.

A country home is, of course, the most precious possession a child can have—a country home in which his ancestors have lived for years, and which has a large garret, a capacious cellar, and several barns. One might wish that every child might be born in Salem or Plymouth, or near one of those old settlements. But as that would be quite impossible, considering the acres which we are compelled to cover as a nation, we may as well see what can be done, in the way of Home Amusements, with the garret as well as the parlor. The garret, in both town and country, has been the earliest home of the legitimate drama since the first youthful aspirant for histrionic honors strapped on the sock and buskin. A good country barn has also been sometimes the scene not only of the strolling but of the resident player.



### III.

## PRIVATE THEATRICALS ; ACTING PROVERBS AND CHARADES.

WHEREVER the amateur actor pitches his tent or erects his stage, he must consider wisely the extraneous space behind the acting arena necessary for his exits and entrances, and his theatrical properties. In an ordinary house the back parlor, with two doors opening into the dining-room, makes an ideal theatre ; for the exits can be masked, and the space is specially useful. One door opening into a large hall is absolutely necessary, if no better arrangement can be made. The best stage is, of course, like that of a theatre, with areas all around and behind it, so that the actors have a space to retire into. This is difficult in a parlor, unless it be a very large one. The difficulty, however, has been and will be solved by the ingenious. Drawing up the big sofa in front of the footlights, and arranging a pair of screens and a curtain, has often served well for a parlor play.

It is hardly necessary to say that all these arrangements for a play depend, in the first place, on the requirements of the play itself and its legitimate business, which may demand a table, a bureau, a piano, a fireplace, etc. And here we would say to the youthful actor, Select your play at first with a view to its requiring little change of scene, and not much furniture. A young actor needs space ; he is embarrassed by too many chairs and tables. Then, again,

choose a play which has so much varied incident in it that it will, as it is said, "play itself." Of this branch of our subject we will treat later.

The first thing to be built is the stage. Any carpenter will lay a few stout boards on end-pieces, which are simply squared joists, and for very little money will take away the boards and joists afterward ; or a permanent stage can be built for a few dollars. Sometimes ingenious boys build their own stage with old boxes ; but this is apt to be dangerous. Very few families are without an old carpet, which will serve for a stage-covering ; and, if this is lacking, green baize is very cheap. A whole stage-fitting—curtains and all—can be made of green cambric ; but it is better to have all the stuffs of woolen, for the danger from fire is otherwise great. Footlights may be made of tin, with pieces of candle put in ; or a row of old bottles of equal height, with candles stuck in the mouth, make a most admirable and very cheap set of footlights. The mother, an elder brother, or some one with judgment, should see to all these things, or the play may be spoiled by an accident.

The curtain is always a trouble. A light wooden frame should be made by the carpenter ; firm at the joints, and as high as the stage, to the front part of which it should be attached. This frame forms three sides of a square, and the curtain must be firmly nailed to the top-piece. A stiff wire should be run along the lower edge of the curtain, and a number of rings be attached to the back of it in squares—three rows of four rings each, extending from top to bottom. Three cords are now fastened to the wire, and, passing through the rings, are run over three pulleys on the upper piece of the frame. It is well for all young managers of garret theatres to get up one of these curtains, even if they have to hire an upholsterer to help them. The draw-curtain never works surely, and often hurts the *dénoûment* of the play. In the case of the drop-

curtain which we have described, one person holds all the ends of the cords, tied together ; and, on pulling this, the curtain goes up and down as if by magic, and rarely gets out of order, which is a great gain.

Now as for stage properties. Almost any household, or any self-respecting garret, will hold enough of "things." If it does not, let the young actors exercise their ingenuity in making up, with tinsel-paper and other cheap material, all that they will want. Turnips, properly treated with a jackknife, have heretofore served for Yorick's skull in the great play of "Hamlet." A boy who knows how to paint can, on a white cotton background, with a pot of common black paint, indicate a scene. If he be so fortunate as to know a kindly theatrical manager who will let him for once go behind the scenes, he will find that the most splendid effects are gained by a very small outlay.

As for the theatrical wardrobe, that is a very easy matter, if the children have an indulgent and tasteful mother, who will help a little and lend her old finery.

A brigand's costume (and brigands are very convenient theatrical friends) is easily arranged. Procure a black felt hat, fastened up with a shoe-buckle ; a bow and a long feather ; a jacket, on which Fanny will sew some brass buttons ; one of mamma's or sister's gay scarfs, tied round the waist several times ; an old pair of pantaloons, cut off at the knee, and long stockings, tied up with scarlet ribbons ; a pair of pumps, with another pair of buckles, and any old pair of pistols, dirks, or even carving-knives, stuck in the belt, and you have, at very small expense, a fierce brigand of the Abruzzi.

Girls' dresses are still easier of attainment. But the great trouble in the dressing of girls for their characters is the frequent inattention to the time and style of the character. A young lady who plays the part of Marie Antoinette must remember the enormous hoops which were a

part of the costume of the unlucky queen. She must not be content to merely powder her hair. She must remember time, place, circumstance, and dress herself accurately, if she wishes to produce a proper dress. A lady once wore in the part of Helen of Troy, for private theatricals in New York, a pair of high-heeled French slippers, with the classic *peplum*. A gentleman of archæological tastes declared that he could not stay in a house where such crimes were committed against historical accuracy! She should have worn the classic sandal, of course—not modern black slippers.

The “make-up” of a character requires study and observation. In the painting and shading of faces, adaptation of wigs, application of mustaches and whiskers, there is much to be done. A box of water-colors, a little chalk, camel’s-hair pencils, a saucer of rouge, a burnt cork, and some India ink, all are useful. If these can not be got, one burnt cork, aided by a little flour, will do it all. Mustaches can be made by borrowing mamma’s old discarded artificial curls, cutting them off to a proper length, and gumming them on the upper lip. The hair of a good old Newfoundland dog has served this purpose. A very pretty little mustache can be painted with India ink. However, if near a barber or a hair-dresser—or, still better, a costumer—it is well to get ready-made mustaches, which come of all colors, already gummed. If the make-up of an old man is required, study a picture of an old face, and trace on your own face with a camel’s-hair pencil and India ink the wrinkles, the lines of an aged countenance. Make a wig of white cotton if you can not hire one of gray hair.

If a comic face is needed, stand before a glass and grin, *watch the lines* which the grin leaves, and trace them up with a reddish-brown water-color. Put on rouge particularly about the nose and eyes. A frown, a smile, a sneer,

a simper, or a sad expression, can always be painted by this process. The gayest face can be made sad by dropping a line or two from the corners of the mouth and of the eyes.

For a ferocious brigand, cork the eyebrows heavily, and bring them together over the eyes. If you wish to produce emaciation or leanness, cork under the eyes, and in the hollow of the cheek (or make a hollow), and under the lower lip. To make up a pretty girl, even out of a young man's face, requires only some rouge and chalk and a blonde wig. There should be also a powdering about the eyebrows, ears, and roots of the hair. There should be a heavy coat of powder on the nose, and after the rouge is put on, a shower of powder over that. All will wash off without hurting the complexion. For a drunkard or a villain, purple spots are painted on chin, cheek, forehead, and nose.

The theatrical wardrobe, to be complete, should have several different wigs, and as these can not be made well except by an artist in hair, we recommend the actors to lay out all their spare cash on these adjuncts. Having dressed for the part, the acting comes much more easily. No one knows the effect of dress better than the real actor, who calls it "the skin of the part."

The lines to be spoken should be committed most thoroughly to memory. Without this no play can be a success. Each performer should write out his own part, with the "cues," or the words which come directly before his own speeches, and commit the whole to memory. When the performer hears the words of the cue, the words of his own part come to his lips immediately.

The exits and entrances, and what is known as "stage business," are always difficult to beginners. The necessity of closets, etc., in a small stage, places to retire to, and the like, can be managed, however, by screens, and these are so useful in all private theatricals that one should be made,

six feet high by three feet wide, hinged, and covered with wall-paper, before any plays are attempted.

We are describing the very cheapest and most unsophisticated private theatricals—such as those which school-boys and girls could get up in the country, or in a city basement or garret, with very little money or help from their parents. And these are the ones which give the most pleasure. Expensive and adroitly-conducted theatricals, in a city where experts can be hired to do these things, have no lasting charm. It is, as in all other things, *the amount of ourselves* which we put into anything which makes us enjoy private theatricals. And in a city, grown people have the privilege of the best theatricals, beside which all amateur efforts are lamentably tame. But a party of fresh young people, full of the ichor of youth, can with the slightest help produce the most delightful effects with very simple means.

Young girls are too apt, in playing private theatricals, to sacrifice character to prettiness. Now this is a fatal mistake. To dress a part with finikin fineness, which is to be a representation of quite different sorts of qualities, is poor art. Let them rather imitate Miss Cushman's rags in *Meg Merrilies*, or Bastian Le Page's homely peasant simplicity in *Joan of Arc*. Remember, the drama is the mirror of nature, and should produce its strong outlines and its deep shadows. It is in this realism that men surpass women. The college theatricals, in which all parts are played by men, are by far the best.

In selecting a play, amateurs should try and find one, as we have said, which "plays itself." They should not attempt those delicate and very difficult plays which only great artists can make amusing. They should select the play which is full of action and situation, like "*The Follies of a Night*," or "*Everybody's Friend*." The most commonplace actors fail to spoil such plays as these; and



there are for younger performers hundreds of good plays, farces, and musical burlesques to be found at every bookstore. "Naval Engagements," "A Cure for the Fidgets," "The Two Buzzards," "Betsey Baker," "Box and Cox," "A Regular Fix," "Incompatibility of Temper," "Ici l'on parle Français," "To oblige Benson," are among the many which really help the amateur, instead of crushing him.

But no one who is not a first-rate actor should attempt "Two can play at that Game," "A Morning Call," "A Happy Pair," or any of those beautiful French trifles which look so easy, and in the hands of good actors are so charming, for they depend upon the most delicate shades of acting to make them even passable.

For those players of a larger growth, who attempt the very interesting business of amateur theatricals on a more ambitious plane, we can illustrate our meaning as to plays which "play themselves" by two instances :

"Ici l'on parle Français" gives the two amusing situations of a man who is trying to speak French with the aid of a phrase-book, and the counterpoise of a Frenchman who is trying to speak English in the same fragmentary manner. Their mutual mistakes keep the house in a roar; and almost any clever pair of young men can assume these two characters to great advantage. They each have an eccentric character mapped out for them, and very little shading is necessary.

Again, for a very much more poetical and entirely different range of part, but yet one which "plays itself," we would suggest "Pygmalion and Galatea," Gilbert's beautiful and poetical play. Here we have the great novelty of a young lady disguised as a marble statue. She can be "made up" with white powder and white merino drapery to look very like a marble statue, and a powerful white lime-light should be thrown on her from above. There is a tableau within a play to begin with, and something novel

and interesting. The marble statue, however, at the very start becomes endowed with life, steps down from her pedestal, walks forward to the footlights, talks, and receives the homage of a lover. Now, almost any pretty and intelligent maiden can make this part very interesting. She needs nothing but grace and a good memory to do this Galatea well. The part plays itself.

The same young actress could not do Lady Teazle—that delightful and intricate bit of acting, so dependent upon stage tradition and stage training that old theatre-goers say that in fifty years only five actresses have done it well. Still less could she approach the heroine in the “Morning Call” or the young wife in “Caste.” These parts demand the long, severe stage training of an accomplished artist. The Galatea is assisted by the novelty of the position, by the fact that every young maid is a marble statue, in one sense, until Love makes her a woman, so that each person may give a strikingly individual portrait; and, above all, it is a play which is a new creation, and therefore capable of a new interpretation.

We do not advise amateurs to undertake Shakespeare, unless it be “Katherine and Petruchio,” which is so gay and scolding that it *almost* plays itself.

The very beautiful comedies of Robertson seem very easy when one sees Mr. Wallack’s company play them; but they are very difficult for amateurs. They depend upon the most delicate shading, the highest art, and the neat finish.

The sterling old comedies—all excepting “The Rivals”—are almost impossible, even those which are full of incident and full of costume. Their quick movement seems to evade the player; and what is so terrible to the listener as to endure even a second’s suspension in the “give and take” of a comedy? “The Rivals,” strange to say, is a very good play for amateurs.



Boucicault's farces and society plays run very well on the amateur stage. Lady Gay Spanker is not a difficult part. Bulwer's "Lady of Lyons" should never be attempted by amateurs. It becomes mawkishly sentimental in their hands. But Charles Reade's "Still Waters run Deep" is excellent for amateurs; and "Money" runs off rather more easily than one would suppose.

Amateurs are very fond of "A Wonderful Woman," but we can not see much in it. "The Wonder" is very picturesque. It is one of the plays which plays itself; and the Spanish costumes are beautiful. The famous comedies, "My Awful Dad," "Woodcock's Little Game," and "The Liar," should be studied very thoroughly by observation and by book before being attempted by amateurs. The "Little Game" has two very hard parts to fill, Mrs. Colonel Carver and Woodcock; still it has been done moderately well. For a parlor comedy, "The Happy Pair" is a great favorite; and "Box and Cox" can be done by anybody, and is always funny. Music helps along wonderfully, as witness the immortal "Pinafore," which has been played by amateurs to admiration for hundreds of admiring audiences.

A stage manager is indispensable. In getting up ambitious plays in a city, which the courageous amateur sometimes attempts, an actor from the theatre is generally hired to "coach" the neophytes. In the country, some intelligent friend should do this, and he can properly be arbitrary. It is a case for an absolute monarchy. The stage manager must hear his company read the play over first, and tell John faithfully if he is better fitted for the part of the lackey rather than that of the lover. He must disabuse Seraphina of the belief that she either looks or can play the *ingenu*, and relegate her to the part of the housekeeper. We all have our natural and acquired capabilities for various parts, and can do no other.

Then, after reading the part, comes the rehearsal ; and this is the crucial test. The players must study, rehearse, rehearse, study, and not be discouraged if they grow worse rather than better. There is always a part lagging, and the dress rehearsal is invariably a discouraging thing. But that is a most excellent and advantageous discouragement if it inspire the actors to new efforts. Nothing can spoil a private theatrical attempt like conceit and self-satisfaction. The art is as difficult a one as playing on the violin ; and, although an amateur may learn to play pretty well, the distance between him and a professional is as great as that between an amateur violinist and Vieuxtemps. The amateur must remember this fact.

“ Acting proverbs ” is an ingenious way of suggesting an idea by its component parts rather than stating it outright. The parts are not written, but merely talked over, and are often done by clever young people on the spur of the moment. It is well, however, to consult beforehand as to the argument of the play. The books are full of little plays written upon such proverbs as “ All is not Gold that Glitters,” “ Honor among Thieves,” “ All is Fair in Love and War,” etc. But we advise young people to take up less well-known proverbs, and to write their own plays. They might learn one or two as a sort of exercise, but the fresh outcrop of their own originality will be much better. The same may be said with the acting of charades.

A dramatic charade is a very ingenious thing, and a very neat little play in four acts can be made from the word AB-DI-CATE. A B, of course, presents a school scene. And at a watering place, if some witty man or woman will represent the schoolmaster or schoolmistress, all the pupils can be the grown men and women who are well known. The entrance of a fashionable mamma, her instantaneous effect on the severity of the teacher, the taking off the fool’s-cap from the head of Master Tommy, who has been in dis-

grace—all will cause laughter and an opportunity for local jokes. This is Act I. DI can be represented by the *dyeing* process of a barber who has to please many customers ; or “The *die* is cast” ; or an apposite allusion to Walter Scott’s “*Die Vernon*” ; or some comico-tragico scene of “I can but *die*.” This is Act II. Cate, to “*cater*,” “*Kate*”—for bad spelling is permitted—all these are in order. This is Act III. The last act can be the splendid pageant of a Turkish *Abdication*, in which a sultan abdicates in favor of his son. All the camel’s-hair shawls, brilliant turbans, and jewelry of the house and neighborhood can here be introduced with effect.

Charades in which negroes, Irish or German people, or anybody with a dialect, enter in and form a part, are very amusing if the boys of the family have a genius for mimicry. Amateur minstrels are very funny. The getting up of a party of white men as black men is, however, attended with expense. The gift of singing a comic song is highly appreciated in the family circle of amateur dramatists, and a little piece with songs is very sure to be acceptable.

If every member of the party will do what he can, without any false shame, or any egotistical desire to outdo the others, if the ready-witted will do what they can to help the slow-going, and if the older members of the family will help along, these amusements will cheer many a winter’s evening, many a long rainy week, and will improve all who are connected with them ; for memory and elocution, good manners and a graceful bearing, are all included in the playing of charades, proverbs, and the little dramas.

#### IV.

### TABLEAUX VIVANTS.

WE now come to one of the most artistic of all Home Amusements—the *Tableau vivant*.

Lady Hamilton amused the people of her age, all over Europe, by playing in a parlor very striking living pictures. All she asked was a corner of the room, a heavy curtain behind her, and a few shawls and turbans. Being a beautiful and graceful woman, with the dramatic instinct, she gave imitations of celebrated statues and pictures, and was no doubt aided by some very ingenious painting, which she knew how to apply to her own fair face. The art she discovered is certainly worth trying in the present age as an amusement.

The preparations for good tableaux should be somewhat elaborate. A vista should be built and lined with dark-colored cloth ; lights should fall from the top, sides, and front, so as to avoid shadows. The groups should be striking, the colors clear, and the attitudes simple. Sometimes there are such wonderful and unpremeditated effects from these living pictures that artists hold up their hands in despair ; more often they are ruined by shadows ; the lights are not well arranged, and the whole effect lacks elevation and meaning. It is difficult to arrange a crowded tableau, but it can be done.

The principle of a picture—a pyramidal form—should be observed closely in tableau. To secure this desirable

object the persons in the background must stand on elevations. Boxes covered with dark cloth, so as to be unnoticeable, are the best of all devices, and the effect of any object held up in the hand, as a scepter, a bird, a distaff, or a wreath, must be carefully noted, as it may throw a shadow on the picture in the background. There never was, or could be, a tableau which did not have some weak spot, and these shadows are the faults which most easily beguile ; but they can be avoided.

A group of Puritans make into many very striking pictures. The costume is beautiful and becoming ; red cloth can be laid on the table or floor to set off the grays ; and the many picturesque incidents in our early history form very pleasing subjects. It is a beautiful dress for women and a dignified one for men—that gray dress and high ruff, that broad hat, and plain, long gown. A group of young people might take a winter's amusement out of reading up the Puritan annals, and giving at the Academy or in their own homes a series of Puritan tableaux.

A tableau can be given in parlors separated by folding-doors ; but they are not by any means as good as those for which a stage, vista and footlights, flies and side-lights, are arranged. If there is a large unused room, where these properties can stand, the result is very much better. There should be a gauze curtain or one of black tarlatan, which should have no seams in it, and this curtain should hang in front of the stage all the time. The drop-curtain must be outside of this. The gauze curtain serves as a sort of varnish to the picture, and adds to the illusion.

Although the pure white light of candles, gas, kerosene, or lime-light is the best for tableaux, very pretty effects are produced by the introduction of colored lights, such as can be produced by the use of nitrate of strontia, chlorate of potash, sulphuret of antimony, sulphur, oxymuriate of potassa, metallic arsenic, and pulverized charcoal. Muriate

of copper makes a bluish-green fire, and many other colors can be obtained by a little study of chemistry. Here are some simple recipes :

To make a *red fire*.—Five ounces nitrate of strontia, dry, one and a half ounces finely-powdered sulphur. Take five drachms chlorate of potash and four drachms sulphuret of antimony and powder them separately in a mortar ; then mix them on paper, and, having mixed the other ingredients, previously powdered, add these last, and rub the whole together on paper. In use, mix a little spirits of wine with the powder, and burn in a flat iron plate or pan.

A *green fire* may be made by powdering finely and mixing well thirteen parts flour of sulphur, five parts oxymuriate of potassa, two parts metallic arsenic, three parts pulverized charcoal, seventy-seven parts nitrate of baryta ; dry it carefully, powder, and mix the whole thoroughly. A polished reflector fitted on one side of the pan in which this is burned will concentrate the light and cast a brilliant green luster on the figures. A bluish-green fire may be produced by burning muriate of copper finely powdered and mixed with spirits of wine. These fires smell unpleasantly in the drawing-room ; and equally good effects may almost always be produced by colored globes, if the light is not needed too quickly.

Sulphate of copper, when dissolved in water, will give a beautiful *blue* color. The common red cabbage gives three colors. Slice the cabbage and pour boiling water on it ; when cold, add a small quantity of alum, and you have *purple*. Potash dissolved in the water will give a brilliant *green*. A few drops of muriatic acid will turn the cabbage-water into a *crimson*.

Then, again, if a ghostly look be required, mix common salt with spirits of wine in a metal cup and set it upon a wire frame over a spirit-lamp. When the cup becomes heated, and the spirits of wine ignite, the other lights in



the room should be extinguished, and that of the spirit-lamp shaded in some way. The result will be that the whole group will become like the witches in Macbeth,

“That look not like the inhabitants of the earth,  
But yet are of it.”

This burning of common salt produces a very weird effect. It seems that salt has some other properties than the conservative, preserving, hospitable kind of quality which legend and the daily needs of mankind have ascribed to it.

A very fine and artistic set of tableaux can be gotten up by reference to such a great work as “Boydell’s Shakespeare,” if it happens to be at hand. Also a study of fine engravings, such as one finds in the “National Academy.” If these books are not attainable, almost any pictorial magazine will furnish subjects. Or, if imagination is consulted, construct a series out of Waverley, or from the but too well known scenes of the French Revolution, or from George Eliot’s delightful “Romola”—a book full of remarkable pictures, with the additional charm of the old Florentine dress. Sometimes a very impressive poem is given in tableaux, like Tennyson’s “Princess,” or, the “Dream of Fair Women.” Then there are many artistic but rather horrible surprises, as “The Head of John the Baptist,” which can be “cut off” admirably by an intervening table, and so on; but nothing is so good as a study of the fine groups of the best painters.

Venetian scenes, from Titian’s and Tintoretto’s pictures, can be admirably represented in tableaux. The Italian wealth of color is always impressive; and as engravings of these pictures are attainable, it is well to represent them. Roman scenes are very effective, and especially as Alma Tadema arranges them for us, with his fine feeling for the antique.

The humor of Hogarth, aided as it is by the picturesque dress of his day, can be represented in a tableau. But

without some such aids humor is generally lost in a tableau. There is not time for it. Some of Darley's groups, as, for instance, the illustrations of "Rip Van Winkle," are admirable, and would seem to contradict this statement, for they are full of fun; but then—they are wonderfully well dressed. That early Revolutionary dress, borrowed in part from the days of Queen Anne, is very picturesque.

If there is some one in the group whose fine sense of the proprieties of art can be trusted, the allegorical can be attempted. But the danger is that the allegorical in art is generally ridiculous. Faith, Hope, and Charity, Mercy and Peace, are better anywhere than in pictures.

The grotesque is always lost in a tableau, where there seems to be a sort of æsthetic demand for the heroic, the refined, and the delicate. A double action may be presented with very good effect; as in some of those fancies of Retzsch and Ary Scheffer, where an angel bends over a sleeping child, or a group, unknown to the actors in front, is representing another picture behind. But the best effects are the simplest. One should not attempt too much. The old example, called "The Dull Lecture," painted by Gilbert Stuart Newton, where a prosy old philosopher is reading aloud to a pretty girl who is fast asleep, is a case in point. That has been a favorite tableau for forty years, nor are its charms yet done away with. Tableaux from Dickens have only a moderate success, excepting, perhaps, the rather overdone "Christmas Carol." The dress is wanting in color and character.

Tableaux in which animals are introduced are sometimes very effective, if stuffed bears and lions and tigers can be hired from a museum. A fine tableau was once composed, from a French print, of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon; but the camel on which that lofty lady arrived was a piece of scene-painting done by a very clever artist, and it would be difficult to improvise one.



## BRAIN GAMES.

WE now come to the winter evening, and the pencil and paper.

It is a delightful feature of our modern civilization that books are very cheap, and that the poets are read by everybody. That would be a very barren house where one did not find Scott, Byron, Goldsmith, Longfellow, Tennyson, Browning, Bret Harte, and Jean Ingelow. Very few boys and girls can reach the age of sixteen without having committed to memory some immortal poem of one of these most popular poets.

Therefore there would be no embarrassment if we asked the members of any evening circle to write down three or four lines in the measure of "Evangeline," "Lady Clara Vere de Vere," "The Corsair," "The Traveler," "Marmion," or "Hervé Riel," "The Heathen Chinee," or the pretty "Bird Song" of Jean Ingelow. Not a parody only, however, but a parody involving a certain idea or word.

In the great year of Coggia's comet this game was thus played, and a young man was requested to speak of the comet in the style of "Mother Goose." The result was as follows :

"Sing a song of Coggia—  
Comet in the sky!  
Wonder if he'll trouble us,  
Whip up you or I!

When his tail is over,  
 Then begin to crow;  
 Four-and-twenty doctors,  
 Tell us all you know!"

Another of the circle was directed to treat of the Wood Fire in the measure of Tennyson's "May Queen." The result was the following:

"If you're snapping, snap out wisely, snap out wisely, burning wood!

You would not snap so wildly if your drying had been good.  
 Nor had I, sitting near you with the hearth-brush in my hand,  
 Have found no peace in sitting, for fear of burning brand."

This was declared to be too easy a game for such a wild and superfluous supply of brains, and, therefore, the word *Poker* was pronounced to be an essential element of every future poem. Poor Browning and Longfellow, Bret Harte and Walter Scott, were mercilessly spitted on that poker. Much foolscap was spoiled, but much fun gained. Here is one of the poker successès:

"AFTER BYRON, WITH A POKER; ALSO AFTER DRINKING FLIP.

"Here, too, the Poker stands in brass! and fills  
 The air around with safety! We inhale  
 The ambrosial aspect which its heat instills  
 (Part of its immortality) to Flip  
 (That beer which is half drawn), within the cup  
 We breathe, and its deep secrets dip.  
 Who Flip can make—who cares where he may fail!  
 Before its wide success let Heliogabalus turn pale.

"We drink, and turn away—we care not where!  
 Fuzzled, and drunk with porter, till the head  
 Reels with its fullness. There, for ever there,  
 Stand thou in triumph, Poker, strong and red!  
 We are thy captives, and thine ardor share.  
 Away! there need no words, no terms precise,  
 To say in loving accents, Flip-cup, thou art nice!"

To this class of Home Amusements belongs also the famous game of "Twenty Questions," which was played so much at one time by the Cambridge professors that they declared that any subject should be reached in ten questions. The proper formula for this very intellectual game is this: Two parties are formed, the questioners and the answerers, the first having the privilege, after the word has been chosen, to inquire—

"Is your subject animal, vegetable, or mineral?"

"What is its size?"

"To what age does it belong?"

"Is it historical or natural?"

"Is it ancient or modern?"

"Is it a manufactured article?" etc.

The number of subjects which are *none* of these, or which *are all three*, or which can not be defined in some way, is of course small. Thus, a Blush, a Smile, a Tear, an Echo, an Avalanche, a Drought, are all indescribable by the exact definitions of the above questions. But the questioner soon arrives at this negative, and begins a new series.

Perhaps one of the most puzzling of subjects is a "mummy." It fulfills certain conditions, but not others; and the final question, "What is its use?" and the answer, "It is used for fuel," though true—for the Arabs cook their dinners by them—does not at all cover the ground of the supposed use of a mummy. The shield of Achilles, the Hole in the Wall through which Pyramus and Thisbe kissed, have been asked and guessed! A Bat baffled even the most ingenious twenty questioners, while the Parlor into which the Spider invited the Fly was guessed.

It is a very intellectual and very amusing game, and those who play it should be as honest as possible in their answers. If puns and wordy equivocation are allowed, the game ceases to be legitimate.

Among games requiring memory and attention we may mention "Cross Purposes," "The Horned Ambassador," "I love my Love with an A," "The Game of the Ring" (arithmetical), "The Deaf Man," "The Goose's History." "Story Play" consists in putting a chosen word into a narrative so cleverly that it will not be readily guessed, although several people tell different stories with the chosen word several times repeated. The best way to play this is to have some odd word which is *not* the word—like *Banana*—and use it several times; yet one's own consciousness of the right word will often betray the story-teller. "The Dutch Conceit," "My Lady's Toilet," "What is my Thought like?" "Scheherazade's Ransom" are very pretty, and may be found in many Manuals of Games. This last deserves a description.

Three of the company sustain the parts of the Sultan, the Vizier, and the Princess Scheherazade. The Sultan takes his seat at the end of the room, and the Vizier then leads the Princess before him, with her hands bound behind her. The Vizier then makes a burlesque proclamation that the Princess, having exhausted all her stories, is about to be punished unless a sufficient ransom be offered. All the rest of the company then advance in turn and propose enigmas, which must be solved by the Sultan or Vizier; sing the first verse of a song, to which the Vizier must answer with the second verse; or recite any well-known piece of poetry in alternate lines with the Vizier. Forfeits must be paid either by the company when successfully encountered by the Sultan or Vizier, or by the Vizier when unable to respond to his opponents; and the game goes on till the forfeits amount to any specified number on either side. Should the company be victorious and obtain the greatest number of forfeits, the Princess is released, and the Vizier has to execute all the penalties that may be imposed upon him. If otherwise, the Princess is led to execution. For

this purpose she is blindfolded, and seated on a low stool. The penalties for the forfeits, which should be previously prepared, are written on slips of paper and put in a basket, which she holds in her hands tied behind her. The owners of the forfeits advance and draw each a slip of paper. As each person comes forward, the Princess guesses who it is, and, if right, the person must pay an additional forfeit, the penalty for which is to be exacted by the Princess herself. When all the penalties have been distributed, the hands and eyes of the Princess are released, and she then superintends the execution of the various punishments that have been allotted to the company.

Another very good game is to send one of the company out, and as he comes in again to address him as the supposed character of Napoleon, a Russian emperor, Gustavus Adolphus, or some well-known character in history or fiction. For instance, a young lady leaves the room, and as she enters some one says :

“Charming and noble heroine, most generous and most faithful ! we are glad to see you. How well you look, after all that has happened to you ! Burned alive ? Yes, I should say so ; and all that you suffered before ! How did you like wearing armor ? and what do you think of ungrateful kings ? How was it at home before you left —— ? Did you really see those visions ? and how did St. —— look ? And, now that you are come back, will you ever be so generous and noble as to fight for *any* cause except yourself ?”

Of course, the young lady knows that she is Joan of Arc. But it is not necessary that character should be so plainly indicated, however, as in this example.

“The Echo” is another very pretty game. It is played by reciting some little story, which Echo is supposed to interrupt whenever the narrator pronounces certain words which recur frequently in his narrative. These words relate to the profession or trade of him who is the subject of

the story. If, for example, the story is about a soldier, the words which would recur the most frequently would naturally be "Uniform," "Gaiters," "Chapeau bras," "Musket," "Plume," "Pouch," "Sword," "Saber," "Gun," "Knapsack," "Belt," "Sash," "Cap," "Powder-flask," "Accouterments," and so on. Each one of the company, with the exception of the person who tells the story, takes the name of Soldier, Powder-flask, etc., except the name "Accouterments." When the speaker pronounces one of these words, he who has taken it for his name ought, if the word has been said only once, to pronounce it twice; if it has been said twice, to pronounce it once. When the word "Accouterments" is uttered, the players—all except the soldier—ought to repeat again the word "Accouterments" either once or twice.

These games are amusing, as showing how defective a thing is memory, and how apt, when under fire, to desert us. It is also very queer to mark the difference of character exhibited by the players. The most unexpected revelations are made.

Another very funny game is "Confession by a Die," played with cards and dice. It would look at first like a parody on "Mother Church," but it is not so guilty. A person takes some blank cards, and, counting the company, writes down a sin for each. The unlucky sinner when called upon must not only confess, but, by throwing the dice also, confess as many sins as they indicate, and do penance for them all. These can, with a witty leader, be made very funny.

"The Secretary" is another good game. The persons sit at a table with square pieces of paper, and pencils, and each one writes his own name, handing the paper, carefully folded down, to the Secretary, who distributes them, saying "Character!" Then each one writes out an imaginary character, hands it again to the Secretary, who says



“Future!” The papers are again distributed, and the writers forecast the future. Of course, the Secretary throws in all sorts of other questions, and, when the game is through, the papers are read. They form a curious and heterogeneous piece of reading. Sometimes such curious bits of character-reading crop out that one suspects and dreads complicity. But, if it is honestly played, the game is amusing.

Of Ruses and Catch-games, Practical Jokes, and all plays involving mystification and mortification, we have a great abhorrence. They do not belong to the class of Home Amusements. Let them be relegated to that bad limbo of “college hazing,” and other ignoble tricks which some people call fun. Far better the games which call for wit, originality, and inspiration; which show knowledge, reading, and a full *repertoire*; and a familiarity with all the three homely studies—geography, arithmetic, and history, including natural history. One of these games is called “The Traveler’s Tour,” and may be made very interesting, if the leader is ingenious. It is played in this way: One of the party announces himself the “Traveler.” He is given an empty bag, and counters with numbers on are distributed among the players. Thus, if twelve persons are playing, the numbers must count up to twelve—a set of *ones* to be given to one, *twos* to two, and so on. Then the Traveler asks for information about the places to which he is going. The first person gives it, if he can; if not, the second, and so on. If the Traveler considers it correct information, or worthy of notice, he takes from the person one of his counters, as a pledge of the obligation he is under to him. The next person in order takes up the next question, and so on. After the Traveler reaches his destination, he empties his bag, and sees to whom he has been indebted for the greatest amount of information. He then makes him the next Traveler. Of course, this opens the door for all sorts of

witty rejoinders, as the players choose to exaggerate the claims of certain hotels, the geographical position of places, and the hits at such a place as Long Branch, for instance, by describing it as an "inland spot, very retired, where nobody goes," etc., etc. Or it can be played seriously, with the map of Europe or America in one's memory. The absurd way is, however, the favorite style with most, as in this wise :

*Traveler.* "I am going to Newport this summer. Which is the best route?"

*Answer.* "Well, start by the Erie Railroad and try to form a junction with the Pittsburg and Ohio."

*Trav.* "When shall I get there?"

*An.* "If you take the Southern Pacific you may reach Newport before the Fall River boat gets in" (sarcasm on the slowness of the boat).

*Trav.* "How if I go by the Northern Pacific?"

*An.* "Well, that is better than the *Wickford* route."

Or *Trav.* says: "I want to go to San Francisco; how shall I start?"

*An.* "Well, at the rate the Cunarders are going to Europe now, your quickest way is to take the *Gallia*, and on reaching Liverpool to go to India by the Overland Route, and so round the world."

The rhyming game is also very amusing. It is done in this way :

*Speaker.* "I have a word that rhymes with *Game*."

*Interlocutor.* "Is it something statesmen crave?"

*Sp.* "No, it is not *Fame*."

*In.* "Is it something that goes halt?"

*Sp.* "No, it is not *Lame*."

*In.* "Is it something tigers need?"

*Sp.* "No, it is not to *Tame*."

*In.* "Is it what we all would like?"

*Sp.* "No, it is not *Good Name*."



*In.* "Is it to shoot at Duck?"

*Sp.* "Yes, and that Duck to *maim*."

Such words as Nun, Thing, Fall, etc., which admit of many rhymes, are very good ones to choose. The two who play it must be quick-witted and read each other's thoughts.

The end rhymes, which the French like, are very ingenious.\* Try making a poem to fit these words, for instance, and you catch the idea :

Town.	Lay.	Place.	Long.
Renown.	May.	Space.	Wrong.
Run.	Fame.	Rain.	
Sun.	Name.	Train.	

The game of "Crambo," in which each player has to write a noun on one piece of paper and a question on another, is curious. As, for instance, the drawer may get the noun "Mountain," and the question, "Do you love me?" he must write a sonnet or poem in which he answers the one and brings in the other.

The game of "Preferences" has had a long and a successful career. It is a very good addition to Home Amusements to possess a blank-book lying on the parlor-table, in which each guest should be asked to write out answers to the following questions :

Who is your favorite hero in history ?

Who is your favorite heroine in history ?

Who is your favorite king in history ?

Who is your favorite queen in history ?

What is your favorite male Christian name ?

What is your favorite female Christian name ?

\* This was the invention of a poor poet named Dulot, who found rhymes for other poets.

What is your favorite flower ?  
What is your favorite color ?  
What is your favorite style of music ?  
What is your favorite style of climate ?  
What is your favorite amusement ?  
What is your favorite study ?  
What is your favorite exercise ?  
What is your favorite book ?  
What is your favorite game ? etc., etc.

These questions may be amplified according to the taste of the owner of the book.

These books are very common in English country houses, and the statistics of favoritism have been taken. Napoleon Bonaparte, even in the land of the Duke of Wellington, had the greatest number of admirers as a hero ; Mary, Queen of Scots, was the favorite queen in a majority of instances ; Lord Byron led off as a poet, and the names Edward and Alice had the greatest number of votes as admired Christian names. Joan of Arc is always ahead as a heroine. In America, after a five years' experience, a number of books were compared, and resulted in a close tie between Washington and Napoleon as hero ; between Charles X, of Sweden, and Francis I as king ; with Mary, Queen of Scots, far ahead as queen ; with Theodore and Mary as Christian names in advance. Yet an occasional originality crops out in these " preferences," and the examination of the different opinions is always interesting.

The game of Authors, especially when created by the persons who wish to play it, is very interesting. The game can be bought, and is a very common one, as, perhaps, everybody knows ; but it can be rendered uncommon by the preparation of the cards among the members of the family. There are sixty-four cards to be prepared, with each the name of a popular author, and any three of his

works. The entire set is numbered from one to sixty-four. Any four cards containing the name and works of the same author form a book. Thus, "Henry W. Longfellow, 'Hyperion,' 'Evangeline,' 'New England Tragedies,'" would form one set. As the shuffling and distribution of these cards, and the plan of also drawing from a pile in the middle of the table, creates the greatest uncertainty as to the whereabouts of a certain card, much amusement can be derived in the effort to make a book. The cards must be equally distributed one at a time, beginning at the left of the dealer. The players then arrange their cards in the hand. If one finds four of a kind, he immediately declares a book, and lays it face downward on the table; and then, if holding one of the "Longfellow's," he will say "Evangeline." He can ask any other player for "Hyperion." After receiving either the card or a negative answer, the next player to the left goes on with his play. Players can only call for such cards as belong to books of which they hold a portion. Should a player call for a card which he already holds, that card is forfeited to the person of whom it was called. The caller always finds the name of the card he wants among those printed in small type; the person of whom it is called finds it in large type at the top.

This game may be made very useful by using the names of kings and queens, and the learned men of their reigns, instead of authors. It is a very good way to study history. The popes can be utilized, with their attendant great men, and by playing the game for a season the dates and the events of some obscure period of history will be effectually fixed in the memory.

As the numbers affixed to the cards may be purely arbitrary, the count at the end will fluctuate with remarkable impartiality; thus, the Dickens cards may count but one, while Tupper will be named sixteen; Carlyle can be two,

while Artemus Ward shall be sixty. This is made very amusing sometimes. King Henry VIII, who set no small store by himself, can be made to count very little in the kingly game, while the poor Edward IV may have a higher numeral than he was allowed in life.

## VI.

### FORTUNE-TELLING.

WE now come to that game which interests old and young. None are so apathetic but that they relish a look behind the dark curtain. The apple-paring in the fire, the roasted chestnut and the raisin, the fire-back and the stars, have been interrogated since time began. The pack of cards, the tea-cup, the dream-book, the board with the mystic numbers, and the Bible and Key, have been consulted from time immemorial. The makers of games have given in their statistics, and they declare that there are no cards or games so sure of selling well as those which foretell the Future.

Now a very pretty Home Amusement is to cultivate, without believing much in them, the innocent sciences of palmistry and of fortune-telling. Several years ago this led to the making of a very pretty book by Mrs. Gilman, of South Carolina—a poetical and very harmless fortune-teller—made up of lines from the poets. The young ladies of the period used to draw as future husbands: “A professor, and a log cabin in the West”; “a lord, and a castle”; “a merchant prince”; “an irresolute and an obstinate fool”; “a well-favored gentleman,” and so on, the good fortunes being in great advance of the bad ones. It was a popular work, and amused many a tea-party.

Many people, since the advent of Spiritualism, have amused themselves with that wonderful toy, “Planchette,”

and other curious caprices of mind-reading, clairvoyance, table-tipping, and knocks. The Key, which seems to possess strong magnetic powers, and all the performances which the unbeliever calls "nonsense," or worse, and which the believing call "manifestations," are also interesting; but we can not recommend this sort of tampering with nervous and exciting pleasure, as it has undoubtedly sometimes unhinged the most truly innocent minds. Such investigations should be left to strong and sober men, and should be approached in a very philosophical spirit, or not at all.

There can be no harm, however, in a playful consultation of the leaves of the daisy, the four-leaved clover, the fortunate black cat who brings us luck, the moon over the right shoulder, the oracular "You shall travel over land and sea"—believing in all the good fortune, but in none of the bad. The salt should be carefully thrown over the left shoulder, if spilled, and all the Fates and Fairies should be propitiated. It gives delightful variety to life to know all the superstitions and the lore of old nurses and grandmothers. Did we follow them back, we should find that they each had a poetical origin. We all like to believe that we can enumerate on our fingers the false friends, the enemies; but we may hope that the world could not hold the admirers and the friends whom one four-leaved clover or one black cat had given us—or promised us. To be sure, "we had dreamed of snakes, and that meant enemies." But, after all, are not enemies next best to friends? They give us consequences, and who that is worth anything was ever without them? That would be a very colorless individual who should go through life without an enemy.

The riches which are hidden in a fortune-telling set of cards (although like Peter Goldthwaite's treasure) are very real and comforting while they last. They are endless, they have few really trying responsibilities attached, they

can not be taxed, they are absolutely where thieves can not break through and steal. They are so satisfactory, which real wealth never is ; they buy everything we want ; they go farther than any real fortune could go ; they are our real and personal estate, and our poetical dreams ; our Lamp of Aladdin, and our Chemical Bank. They are gained without hurting anybody ; they are dug out of the ground without painful backache or bloodshed ; they are inherited without stain, and can be spent without fear of profligacy. Of what other fortune can we say as much ?

It would be an unending theme to try to make a catalogue of the superstitions of all nations. The Irish, with their wild belief in fairies, that *Leprechaun*—the little man in red, who, if you can catch him, will make you happy and prosperous for ever after ; who has such a strange relationship to humanity that at birth and death the Leprechaun must be tended by a mortal ! to read, as they do—these imaginative people—a sermon in every stone ; to see luck beneath the four-leaved clover, and to hang a legend on every bush ; to follow the more spiritually-minded Scotchman in his second sight, who holds that

“Coming events cast their shadows before.”

A very learned book has been written on the “Superstitions of Wales” alone. Eloquent and poetic are the people who have invented the Banshee, the Brownie (or domestic fairy who does all the work). The more tragic and less loving superstitions of Italy teach that the “evil eye” is always to be dreaded. The Breton superstitions are as wild as the sea-gust which sweeps from their coast. All these are subjects of profound interest to those who read the great subject of race, from ethnology, folk-lore, and ballads. The superstitions of a people tell their innermost characteristics, and are thus profoundly interesting.

The French have, however, tabularized fortune-telling



for us. Their peculiar ability in arranging ceremonials and *fêtes*, and their undoubted genius for tactics and strategy, show that they are able to foresee events with unusual clearness. Their ingenuity in all technical contrivances is an additional testimony in the same direction, and we are not surprised that they have here, as is their wont, given us the practical help which we need in fortune-telling. Mlle. Lenormand, the sorceress who prophesied to Napoleon his greatness, and to many of the princes and great men of France their downfall and their misfortunes, has left us thirty-six cards (to be bought at any book-store), wherein we can read the decrees of fate. Her preface says, "Thousands of noblemen did then acknowledge her great talent already during her lifetime, and did often confess that her method was full of truth and exactness." Lenormand was a very clever sibyl; she had great ingenuity; she throws in enough of the inevitable bad, and finds enough of the possible good, to at least amuse those who consult her oracles. Whether we have confidence or faith in the divination, we can not but look for the lucky cards. In this game "The Cavalier" is a messenger of good fortune, and, if not surrounded by unlucky cards, brings good news, which the person may expect either from his own house or from abroad. This will, however, not take place immediately, but some time after.

"The Clover Leaf" is a harbinger of good news, but if surrounded by clouds it indicates great pain; but if No. 2 lies near No. 26 or 28, the pain will be of short duration, and will soon change to a happy issue.

"The Ship," the symbol of commerce, signifies great wealth, which will be acquired by trade or inheritance. If near to the person, it means an early journey.

"The House" is a certain sign of success and prosperity, and although the present position of the person may be disagreeable, yet the future will be bright and happy.



If this card lies in the center of the cards under the person, this is a hint to beware of those who surround him.

“A Tree,” if distant from the person, signifies good health. Nine trees, of different cards together, leave no doubt about the realization of all reasonable wishes.

“Clouds” : if their clear side is turned toward the person, it is a lucky sign ; with the dark side turned toward the person, something disagreeable will soon happen.

“A Serpent” is a sign of misfortune, the extent of which depends upon the greater or smaller distance from the person ; it is followed invariably by deceit, infidelity, and sorrow.

“A Coffin,” very near to the person, means, without any doubt, dangerous diseases, death, or total loss of fortune ; more distant from the person, the card is less dangerous.

“The Nosegay” means much happiness in every respect.

“The Scythe” indicates great danger, which will only be avoided if lucky cards surround him.

“The Rod” means quarrels in the family, domestic afflictions, want of peace among married persons, fever, and protracted illness.

“The Birds” mean hardship to be overcome, but of short duration ; distant from the person, they mean the accomplishment of a pleasant journey.

These are descriptions of a few of the picture-cards with which Mlle. Lenormand tells fortunes still, although she has gone to the land of certainty, and has herself found out if her symbols and emblems, and her combinations, really did draw aside the curtain of the future with invisible strings. We advise all our readers to possess themselves of her “Fortune-telling Cards” if they wish to become amateur sibyls.

The cup of tea, and the mysterious wanderings of the grounds around the cup, so long the favorite medium of the

sibyl, seems to be an English superstition. It fits itself to the old crone domesticity of the Anglo-Saxon humble home, rather than to the more out-of-door romance of the Spaniards and the Italians; and yet the most out-of-door people in the world—the gypsies—use it as a means of discerning the future.

The cup should be filled with a weak infusion of tea—grounds and all—and then carefully turning the cup toward one, the tea should be carefully turned out, waving the cup so skillfully that the tea-leaves are dispersed over the surface of the cup. Happy the maid who can turn out the tea without spilling the leaves. If one drop of tea is left in the cup it will mean—a tear.

These grounds, or tea-leaves, have been used from the earliest days as the alphabet of the Parcæ. Before Chinese tea was brought to England the old fortune-tellers made some sort of a brew out of powdered herbs, which left their mark on the cup. We can understand how that sinuous serpent who has had so much to do with our destiny, as a synonym of evil, can be pictured or “visualized” by such a process; but where the sibyl finds the light-haired young man crossing a river, where she finds gold and where trouble, we must leave to the interpreters.

That most interesting of sibyls, “Norna of the Fitful Head,” used molten lead as a means of interpreting the unseen, and that can be done by our modern soothsayers.

Cards from early antiquity have been used to tell fortunes. The Queen of Hearts is the heroine, and as about her group the propitious reds, or the gloomy blacks, so may we hope for good or dread bad luck. The Ace of Spades is a bearer of evil tidings; the King of Hearts, at the right of the Queen, is the very Fortunatus himself. And now, who is this goddess so often invoked? *Fortuna*, courted by all nations, was, in Greek, *Tyche*, or the goddess of chance. She differed from Destiny or Fate in so far that

she worked without law, giving or taking at her own good pleasure, and dispensing joy or sorrow indefinitely ; her symbols were those of mutability—a ball, a wheel, a pair of wings, a rudder. The Romans affirmed that, when she entered their city, she threw off her wings and shoes, and determined to live with them for ever ; she seems to have thought better of it, however. She was a sister of the Par-cæ, or Fates, those three who spin the thread of life, measure it, and cut it off. Fortunatus, he of the inexhaustible purse of gold and the wishing-cap, is too familiar a figure to the readers of fairy tales to be mentioned here.

And yet, although all nations have desired to propitiate Fortuna, her high-priests and interpreters have ever been in disrepute. In Scotland, that land of demonology and witchcraft, of second-sight, of dreamy superstition, fortune-tellers were denounced as vagabonds, and their punishment, by statute, was scourging and burning of the ears. We all know how the knowledge of the “black art” was denounced in Germany ; and the witches of Salem, while they were approached at dead of night by a pale magistrate who desired to have his fortune told, were, at his high behest, tortured, pilloried, and hanged the next week, if the fortune was a bad one, or, if being well foretold, was slow of accomplishment. That half-belief which superstitious persons repose in their oracles, shown in the case of the Indian, who breaks or maims his God if he does not respond to his prayer, and in the remarkable story of Louis XI, of France, who used to alternately pray to and abuse his leaden images of saints, is repeated often in the history of fortune-telling.

Mother Redcap, “a very witch,” was resorted to by hundreds of persons in England as a fortune-teller ; her image remains on a coin dated 1667. The well-known prophecies of her neighbor, Mother Shipton, have come down to us. Poor Redcap had all the duckings and the

batings of the populace. She and her black cat were the favorite horrors of the superstitious inhabitants of Kentish Town, and hundreds of men, women, and children saw the devil come in state to carry her off. But Mother Shipton (who was born at Knaresborough in the reign of Henry VII) became the most popular of British prophets, and, although she was supposed to have sold her soul to the Old Gentleman, she yet died in her bed decently and in order at an extreme old age. So Fortuna is capricious, even in her treatment of her votaries. It is not strange that "Palmistry" should have taken higher ground than mere fortune-telling, and indeed the lines of the hand will seem to map out character, and perhaps destiny, with some accuracy. The books say that the lines running through the palm indicate will or indecision, force or weakness, quickness or slowness ; indeed, all which makes character and fate. We are the arbiters of at least a part of our fortune.

The power to tell fortunes by the hand can be learned from any of the French books on palmistry, and there are one or two little English translations. It can be sufficiently curious and varied to amuse the home circle, and so long as it is done for that purpose, fortune-telling can do no harm.

But the moment we rise above the idea that the beans, the tea-grounds, the black cat, the cards, or the lines in the palm, are but blind guides, making the most palpable mistakes, then the tampering with the curtain becomes dangerous, and we had better leave the future alone.

## VII.

### AMUSEMENTS FOR A RAINY DAY.

It may seem an impeachment of the taste of our readers to have lingered so long on the lesser lights of games and fortune-telling as "Home Amusements," when we have before us the great world of decorative art: æsthetic embroidery, dinner-card designing, china painting, the making of screens, and the thousand and one devices by which the modern family can amuse itself.

The making of screens is an amusement which occupies the whole family most profitably for a rainy day, even if it is to be only the cutting out of pictures from the illustrated newspapers, and the subsequent arrangement of them in curious conjunction on a white cotton or muslin background. The use of screens has dawned upon the American mind within a few years. They are delightful in a dining-room to keep off a draught or to hide a closet-door. They break up a too long room admirably. They are very useful in a bedroom to shut off the washstand and bath; and they are very comforting to the invalid, as a protection to his easy-chair against insidious breezes.

Of course, those of satin or linen, embroidered by a skillful hand; those painted on canvas by the best painters of to-day; those from China and Japan—are the screens of the opulent. Very pretty paper screens may be bought at the shops for three or four dollars. But those on which a group of pictures are to be pasted are the cheapest and

most amusing of any. And do not go and buy highly-glazed pictures for the purpose. If you do, the screen looks like a valentine. But cut out the pictures from old copies of the "London Illustrated News," "Punch," "Harper's Weekly," "Harper's Bazar," and the English "Graphic," paste them thickly one upon another, and you have a curious and most interesting mosaic. A lady in 1876, the Centennial year, made a very beautiful screen of fashion plates from the ordinary magazines of the period. Already (1881) these fashions look very antiquated, and the screen is becoming historically valuable. The effect of these delicately-colored pictures, put on as thickly as possible over the white muslin, has an effect like a festal procession, and is very pretty.

The medium used for adhering the pictures is common flour paste, the pictures being also washed over the outside with the same, and all the edges effectually fastened down, the cotton cloth to which they are applied being tightly stretched over a wooden frame. When domestic paste is made, the material is frequently injured by scorching, or by the addition of too much water. Good paste, when spread on paper, will not strike through it like water, but will remain on the surface, like butter on a piece of bread. To make paste of a superior quality, that will not spoil when kept in a cool place for several months, it is necessary to add dissolved alum as a preservative. When a few quarts are required, dissolve a dessert-spoonful of alum in two quarts of tepid water. Put the water in a tin pail that will hold six or eight quarts, as the flour of which the paste is made will expand greatly while it is boiling. As soon as the tepid water has cooled, stir in good rye or wheat flour, until the liquid has the consistency of cream. See that every lump of flour is crushed before placing the vessel over the fire. To prevent scorching the paste, place over the fire a dish-kettle or wash-boiler, partly filled with



water, and set the tin pail containing the material for paste in the water, permitting the bottom to rest on a few large nails or pebbles, to prevent excessive heat. Now add a teaspoonful of powdered resin, a few cloves to flavor the paste, and let it cook until the paste has become as thick as "Graham mush," when it will be ready for use. Keep it in a tight jar, and it will last for a long time. If too thick, add cold water, and stir it thoroughly. Such paste will hold almost as well as glue.

The famous picture-books of Walter Crane make a very pretty frieze for screens; the artists of the family sometimes paint a frieze. In these days of dados the screens are often made with dado, wainscot, and frieze in three different colored papers, so that there are three tiers of background for the pictures, if the maker desires to leave spaces between them. The cutting out of the pictures is an amusing occupation for all the family on a rainy day.

This making of screens sometimes leads to another very attractive work for a rainy day—the preparation for a fancy dress ball. This, in a lonely country house, far away from the chance of any outward amusement, has often cheated a fortnight's bad weather of its heart-depressing qualities.

As we have not the stores of old armor, old brocade and satin, powdered wigs, and costumes of the different reigns, which may be supposed from modern English novels to be the property of every English mansion, we must call upon taste and upon our national faculty of invention to help us in this dilemma. The country store will give us black and white tarlatan, chintz, cotton flannel (a most excellent medium), and, indeed, flannels of all sorts. Black lace, jewelry, and flowers are in every lady's trunk, and, with some stiff linings and *appliqué* chintz flowers, an old silk can be made into a priceless brocade.

Let us take a Venetian dress first. We will have King *Pantelon*, the Lord of Misrule, in black with scarlet shirt

and three-cornered hat, and attended by his gay and dissolute crew. We will have the *Illustrissimi*, wearing the dress of the ancient Venetian nobility, scarlet cloaks, and long bag wigs, mightily disdainful ; the *Chiozotti* in black velvet, wide lace collars, and high cloth caps, adorned with artificial flowers—they shall shower *confetti* and make jokes ; we shall have dominoes and masks, Egyptians and Neapolitans in velvet, with scarlet caps and stockings, clapping castanets ; we shall have Armenians, Levant merchants and sailors, Turks in caftans, Greeks and Dalmatians, regular-featured Mussulmans, Hindoos with jet-black hair, and Malay Lascars in many-colored turbans, fez, and scarf ; grinning soot-black negroes, Polish Jews in furred caps and long coats, Magyars in Hessians and pelisses ; Bohemian nurses in Czechen costume, a colored handkerchief in the hair ; dark-eyed young *bourgeoises* in coquettish black veils ; elegant ladies in velvet and point lace ; the gondolier, in his picturesque sailor costume and broad sash ; the Finland peasant, with short skirts, long-dangling ear-rings, and silver pins ; the Maltese with her *fazzoletto* ; an old *Contadino*, with short velveteen knee-breeches, gaiters, and colored cotton umbrella ; priests all in black gown, shovel hat, and black silk stockings ; dashing naval officers ; the *Guardia Nazionale*, and weather-beaten fishermen with bronzed faces and red Phrygian cap. We shall have Lord Byron, pale and melancholy, and picturesque Masaniello ; the patriarchs of the Greek Church ; the Spanish beauties, the Swiss peasant, the German Mädchen ; the madcap Harlequin dress of a Spanish princess. Then there will be all the seasons—winter, for instance, in tulle, swansdown, and spun glass ; the Marie Antoinettes, in pink brocade with long, square trains and trimmings of Marabout feathers ; the lovely Georgian costume, a Seville gypsy, a Russian peasant ; a flower-girl, a Nymph ; Night and Day ; Spanish students and Flemish boors ; Pages of Queen



Blanche of Castile ; the beautiful white uniform of the *Dragon de Villars* ; a gothic costume ; Charlemagne and his Paladins. In short—"the Carnival of Venice." All this was done, and well done, at a country house and the adjacent village (a village of not more than fifteen hundred inhabitants), and for very little money, only a few years ago.

The business is done if one only *thinks he can do it* ; and there are numbers enough to work at it. A boarding-school holiday, a watering-place, a large town bent on "getting up something" for charity, should have one such home behind it, where a natural-born leader will set the whole thing going, and the picturesque shores of Italy will give up their delights to some western town, some inland village, some quiet and decorous hamlet of New England, where all the inhabitants are dying of *ennui*.

But here, from the pictures of our screen, which have suggested all this, we have been led off from Decorative Art into the business of giving a ball ! We have been entertaining a motley crowd indeed !

"The day was dull, and dark, and dreary,  
It rained, and the rain was never weary."

But see ! how we have cheated the clouds ! The rainy fortnight has been the most dissipated season possible—all owing to our happy device of getting up a fancy ball—one of the very many pleasant thoughts which have grown out of screens and screen-making.

## VIII.

### EMBROIDERY AND OTHER DECORATIVE ARTS.

LET us return to our three legitimate decorations—our fan-painting, our screen-painting, and our embroideries.

Of Embroidery the world is full, and at its best estate. The foolish old German wool-worsted work has gone out, and in its place we have the very elaborate church needle-work of the Middle Ages, and, better still, its tapestry.

Some ingenious lady discovered that a plain piece of carpet made a very good background for a rich curtain, after a few stitches of embroidery were added ; and it took but one step farther for another lady to find in cotton velvet a good background for tapestry. The figures are sketched on, and then the embroidery is artistically added, in the style of the thirteenth century, when the characters were outlined by a single line, which also designates the shape and folds of the garments. These outlines are filled in with masses of stitches in two or three shades of color. It is best, in making tapestry, to adhere to this simplicity, as in attempting the later richness of the Gobelins the work degenerates into a vulgar imitation.

And in stitching away at the tapestry frame, the well-read mamma might give her daughters a little sketch of the history of tapestry. How once these artistic draperies were the adornments of those stone castles which knew no plastered walls. How they caught the story of the “Iliad” and “Odyssey,” the scenes from the Bible, the whole story

of mythology, the history of great wars. There hangs to-day, at Blenheim, a perfect set of pictures of the victories of the great Duke of Marlborough, done for him by the pious Belgian nuns.

But those works anterior to the sixteenth century have the greatest interest for the student of tapestry. Gold thread and silk were freely used in their embellishment, and the effect is rather that of a mosaic than of a picture. The greens are a study. They are produced with a dark blue for the dark, and a yellow for the light tints. The wonderful work of Matilda, called the Bayeux tapestry, wrought on brown linen ; the many historical pieces found in Italy, done in wools ; and the collections all over Europe, show a mastery over the needle which we have lost.

But it was left for Francis I, of France, to establish the most renowned factory for these beautiful things, when at Fontainebleau he founded what is now the *Gobelins*. The Gobelins were two Dutch dyers of wool, celebrated for their brilliant scarlets, who eventually gave their name to the art, and a "Gobelin" got to mean a tapestry. Under Louis XIV the Luxurious this manufactory attained to highest importance. They became the Herters and Marcottes of France. Colbert, the Prime Minister, united under one head all the different bands of workmen who were employed on furniture and decorations for the royal palaces of France. To the weavers of carpets and tapestry were added embroiderers, goldsmiths, wood-carvers, dyers, etc. Charles Lebrun and his pupils were charged with furnishing designs. Lebrun himself furnished over twenty-four hundred designs. In 1667 Louis himself paid a visit of state to the manufactory, accompanied by Colbert, and examined the magnificent carpets, tapestries, silver plate, and carvings which formed the splendid "Manufactory of Furniture to the Crown." This great establishment, however, went down, as Louis lost money ; and after the death

of Lebrun (he was father to the wretched husband of pretty Madame Le Brun) it returned to its original function of producing tapestry. These Gobelin tapestries grew to be the most wonderful reproduction of pictures ever seen.

But why, one pauses to ask, try to reproduce a picture "done in oils" by the laborious process of needle-work or weaving? Why by process of mosaic? It is one of the useless fancies of the human race. The old tapestry, done by hand when there were no Gobelins, had a meaning and a use. So has the modern tapestry done by hand. It is cheap, it is individual, it is original; but for the Gobelins, that favorite luxury of kings, we fail to see an excuse. However, it is very beautiful, expensive, and rare.

The process of tapestry weaving is called the "*haute lisse*," the warp being placed vertically, in contradistinction to the "*basse lisse*," a work with a horizontal warp, as is usual. The weaver stands with the model which he is to copy behind him. As the surface of the tapestry must present a perfectly smooth and even surface, all cuttings must be made on the wrong side, for the workman never sees the beautiful work he is doing. This has been made use of in poetry in the following simile :

"We work but blindly at the loom,  
Nor see the pattern, save in parts;  
Not ours to mark the gleam or bloom,  
But labor on, with patient hearts.

"But when the angels overhead  
The soul-wrought tapestry unfurls,  
Perhaps the tears we vainly shed  
May glow amid the threads—like pearls.

"The sorrow which has crushed the heart  
A lily blooms, on azure field;  
The strife in which we bore our part  
In bud and flower may stand revealed."

The Gobelins used gold, silver, pearls, and everything decorative in their work, at times, to produce effect. The first Revolution brought destruction to the Gobelins, as it did to everything else, and many choice pieces were burned. But it rose again under the first Napoleon, David furnishing designs. In 1871 the Communists again set fire to the manufactory, burning up the exhibition-room. Four hundred thousand dollars was the estimated loss. But when we remember that there perished tapestries of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, including the "Acts of the Apostles" by Raphael, and the now valuable, graceful, although affected, charming designs of Boucher, which were wrought for Pompadour, besides historical portraits and scenes, this seems a low estimate. The embroidery of the cartoons of Raphael, copies of which may be seen at Hampton Court, were among the greatest of the Gobelin triumphs.

However, to those who have walked the galleries of Florence, who have seen there the grand and beautiful specimens of embroidered tapestry of the sixteenth century, there will ever be a charm about old tapestry in the crude perspective and the sudden shading. It is this, perhaps, which can be copied. It is this to which the modern tapestry worker should address herself, if among the amusements of home she counts the making of curtains, and wall-coverings, and *portières*, which shall almost suggest the possibility that they once hung in a Florentine or a Venetian palace. A dark background of some cheap woolen stuff, a knowledge of drawing, the silk and woolen and cotton and linen threads now brought to our hand so cheaply—will all furnish forth the appliances for the making of tapestry hangings, such as a castellan of the Middle Ages would not have despised.

Painting on fans has become a very common Home

Amusement, and it is a very elegant one. The white silk fan is usually selected, although linen, satin, and wood fans are all easy and pleasant mediums. For painting on silk, some technical knowledge is necessary, some gum-water, or sizing, to prevent the paint from spreading. For painting on wood, one needs only the common water-color box, and a simple knowledge of drawing and painting. Flowers, birds, and butterflies are the favorite devices, monograms having gone out of fashion. It is better, if possible, to have the silk stretched on a frame before it is mounted on sticks, as one still sees the masterpieces of Boucher, Watteau, and Greuze, not yet mounted, but framed, in galleries—far too precious to mount, the Marchioness who ordered them having, perhaps, fortunately forgotten her caprice that we may admire it.

And what pretty and pleasing and altogether historical memories come in with the fan! It was created in primeval ages. The Egyptian ladies had them of lotus-leaves; the Greek and Roman ladies followed. The word *flabellum* occurs often in the Roman literature. They also had fans of peacock-feathers, and of some expansive material painted in brilliant colors. They were not made to open and shut like ours; that is a modern invention. They were stiff, with long handles, for ladies were fanned by their slaves. The *flabellifer*, or fan-bearer, was some young attendant, generally male, whose common business it was to carry his mistress's fan. Would that were the fashion now! There is a Pompeian painting of Cupid as the fan-bearer of Ariadne, and lamenting her desertion by Theseus. In Queen Elizabeth's day the fan was usually made of feathers, like the fan still used in the East. The handle was richly ornamented, and set with stones. A fashionable lady was never without her fan, which was chained to her girdle by a jeweled chain. A satirist of the day, Stephen Gosson, approves of the fan if used to drive away



flies and for cooling the skin. He, however, continues scornfully :

“But seeing they were still in hand,  
In house, in field, in church, in street,  
In summer, winter, water, land,  
In cold, in heat, in dry, in wet—  
I judge they are for wives such tools  
As babies are in plays for fools.”

Queen Elizabeth dropped a silver-handled fan into the moat at Amstead Hall, which occasioned many madrigals. Sir Francis Drake presented to his royal mistress a “fan of feathers, white and red, enameled with a half-moon of mother-of-pearl; within that a half-moon garnished with sparks of diamonds, and a few seed pearls on one side. Having her Majesty’s picture within it, and on the reverse a crow.” Why not try, young ladies, to paint a fan like this? Use silver dust to illustrate “sparks of diamonds.” It would be a very pretty conceit.

Poor Leicester gave, as his New Year’s gift, in 1574, “a fan of white feathers set in a handle of gold, garnished on one side with two very fair emeralds, and fully garnished with rubies and diamonds, and on each side a white bear (his cognizance), and two pearls hanging, a lion romping, with a white muzzled bear at his foot.” This fan would be difficult to copy. It was evidently a love-token from poor, ill-used Leicester to his haughty queen. Just before Christmas, in 1595, Elizabeth went to Kew, dined at my Lord Keeper’s house, and there was handed her a “fine fan, with a handle garnished with diamonds.”

Fans in Shakespeare’s time seem to have been composed of ostrich-feathers, and so on, stuck into handles. In “Love and Honor,” by Sir William Davenant, we find the line,

“All your plate, Vasco, is the silver handle of your old prisoner’s fan.”

Marston says :

“ Another, he  
Her silver-handled fan would gladly be.”

Forty pounds were often given for a fan in Elizabeth's time. Bishop Hall, in his “*Satires*,” in 1597, says :

“ While one piece pays her idle waiting man,  
Or buys a hood, or silver-handled fan.”

The fan of the Countess of Suffolk resembles a powder-puff.

But gentlemen carried fans in those days. We find in a manuscript in the Ashmolean Museum, at Oxford, the following allusion : “ The gentlemen then had prodigious fans, as is to be seen in old pictures, like that instrument which is used to dry feathers, and it had a handle at least one half as long, with which their daughters oftentimes were corrected. Sir Edward Cole, Lord Chief Justice, rode the circuit with such a fan, and William Dugdale told me he was witness of it.” The Earl of Manchester also used such a fan. “ But the fathers and mothers slasht their daughters, in the time of their besom-discipline, when they were perfect women.” Both fashions have happily passed away. Lords Chief Justices no longer “ slash ” their daughters, nor do they carry fans.

Of Catharine de Braganza (1664) we read that she and her maids walked from Whitehall in procession to St. James's Palace through the park in glittering costume of silver lace in the bright morning sunshine. Parasols being unknown in England at that era, the courtly belles used the gigantic green shading-fans, which had been introduced by the Queen and her Portuguese ladies, to shield their complexions from the sun, when they did not wish wholly to obscure their charms by putting on their masks. Both were in general use in this reign. The green shading-fan is of Moorish origin, and for more than a century after



the marriage of Catharine of Braganza was considered an indispensable luxury by our fair and stately ancestral dames, who used them in open carriages, in the promenade, and at prayers, where they ostentatiously screened their devotions from public view by spreading them before their faces while they knelt.

But China and Japan—the home of fans—are waiting to be let in ! and as soon as the India trade was opened by Catharine's marriage treaty, there entered the carved ivory fan, the light bamboo and palm-leaf, the paper fan, the silk folding fan, mounted on beautiful Japanese sticks ; all came to England about this time.

The vellum fans of France, on which Watteau first painted his shepherdesses in hoop-petticoats, and swains in full-bottomed wigs, the choice impossible goddesses of Boucher, with cupids and nymphs, all came next. The history of fans, in France alone, would fill a volume ; and the neighboring kingdom of Spain, where the language of fans has become a very serious study, would give us another volume. The fans of tortoise-shell, enriched with jewels, are a favorite luxury of to-day. Oliver Wendell Holmes has written a delightful poem on the “ Origin of the Fan.” In all our art loan collections there is, nowadays, an exhibition of fans. The young student of fan-painting should strive to see some of those of Watteau and of Boucher. Tiffany to-day turns out some very beautiful specimens ; and more than one of our artists could admirably paint a fan or two as his contribution to Fan History.

Nothing can be prettier as a Home Amusement than fan-painting, into which much, but not too much, Japanese suggestion should creep. Remember, young ladies, the plea of that poor stork, of which we have seen so much, “ that he be allowed to put down his other leg ! ” and spare us the gilded bird, or give him to us but seldom.

The art of Illumination, which is now studied occa-

sionally by our young ladies, goes wonderfully well into fan-painting. Perhaps it is too good for it. Perhaps the same hand which can copy the old initial letter which makes the missals rich and rare, should not condescend to the application of the same delicate manipulation in order to ornament a fan. But a fan of vellum, painted by an illuminator, is still a very beautiful thing.

A fan painted to illustrate a song or a ballad is a very pretty thing. The common linen fan, on which a clever hand draws with pencil or ink the story of "Mary, Mary, quite contrary," becomes a precious possession. And in these days of Kate Greenaways and Rosina Emmets we ought to have many charming fan decorators. We should not object if they selected the old-fashioned *maniéré* goddesses, hovering cupids, smiling nymphs, and *posé* infants of Boucher, if they would give us his cool, pearly grays, and sweet, soft rose tints. We have had enough of realism and ugliness, disagreeable cat-tails, and harsh, dirty Joan of Arcs. Let us have a little beauty by way of a change, at least on our fans. Perhaps we could "live up to it."

Nor should we fail to note the pleasant possibility of all the dinner-cards of a winter coming fresh from the hands of the young ladies of the family. What infinite suggestion does one glimpse of the garden on a June morning give to the fair artist! We can imagine that some poetical member should thus summon and direct her sister and brother artists in the following manner:

"Do give me, Rosamond, that spray of sweet-brier which has caught a bit of spider-web over its sweetest pink bud. Throw in that green dragon-fly who is about to dart through the spider's web. Give me, Grace, that morning-glory cup with a yellow butterfly floating over it. It will shame the best Venetian glass of Mrs. Cræsus.

"You, Jane, paint me those dandelions, strewed by

some millionaire who is tired of his gold. You, Constance, take this volume of the old poets, and hunt up appropriate mottoes to write under these fancies from Nature. They shall illuminate our dinners of next winter, and breathe the breath of Nature through our stiff conventionality. They shall be our visitors from Titania.

“Yes, a happy thought! You, Mary, who are so akin to the fairies, give us your kindred. Paint me Oberon and Queen Mab giving a banquet in yon lily. What a splendid and baronial apartment! How the golden shower falls on their royal heads from those laden stamens! True courtiers they, who never stop flattering. Suggest, if you can, with your brush, the perfume of luxury which is born and bred in this royal pavilion. Show me their delicate guests. Here comes the Butterfly, most *repandu* of beaus; and the Humming-bird, rich bachelor (hard to catch), who dashes in for a look at the beauties, and away again—you can put him in; he is a type for a dinner-card.

“And you, Paul, who are of a strong, masculine, satirical turn, shall make all these frogs and toads into guests in another set of dinner-cards. Give me the frog as an Ambassador. I like his pouting throat, his puffy air—it so simulates importance. How grand and disdainful he is! I declare, he looks so like old Mr. —! But do not make a portrait; that would give offense. These toads are just about as lively and as brilliant as the rank and file of diners-out. Put them all in Worth dresses. Make the dishes on the table after Hawthorne’s delicate fancy, the shapes of summer vegetables—squashes, cucumbers, pea-pods. What is that pretty poem I remember about Pods?

“ ‘The Monk’s-hood and the Shepherd’s-purse,  
And the Poppy’s pepper-caster;  
The Rose’s scarlet reticule,  
And the somber box of the Aster;  
Nasturtion’s biting brandy-flask,

Infused with a wholesome smart ;  
And the Milkweed's knot of white floss silk,  
Which will not come apart ;  
For next to the bud where the Poppy nods,  
And the sweet Moss-rose—are the late Seed-pods.' ”

“ Yes,” said Mary, “ pods are very pretty.”

Well, we have, perhaps, talked nonsense enough about the dinner-cards. It is a pretty Home Amusement for the back piazza in summer, or for the close and guarded warm home parlor of winter. Give us the results of both, young ladies. And since all the wealthy chromo people are offering such splendid sums for the Christmas, Easter, and even advertising cards, why should not every group try their hand at the—perhaps—thousand dollar prize ?

Here is a suggestion for a Christmas card : A group of young pagans going out of the Catacombs are represented as strewing flowers and singing gay songs. On the other side a group of austere early Christians are coming in, singing hymns. Between the two a ray of light comes down through a fissure of the roof and forms a cross. The religion that is going out, the religion that is coming in—the cross is between them. How much a clever hand could make of this moment of time, so replete with interest to all the world !

It would seem as if, with all the suggestions of Easter, that no one would need anything but a paint-box and a pack of blank cards to interest them at this season. We should have the World being hatched out of an egg ; the Saxon goddess Eastre ; the Legend of the Stork ; the German children searching for the Nest in the garden where the Easter-hen had laid her egg ; the great Sunburst ; the Sun dancing on Easter morning ; the games of mediæval England, when the women played ball at one end of the town and the men at the other, and one fine couple taking

occasion to run away to get married on the sly. The Easter Egg is full of meat for the artist.

Growing out of these thoughts comes up the great and increasing taste for symbolism, which finds its highest exponent in church embroidery. The Catholic Church has ever been a good customer of the decorative art schools. It needs and consumes or uses much embroidery. But the pious women of Protestant communion now also deem it a duty and a pleasure to decorate the altars of their beloved churches with much that is symbolic and beautiful, and it is a favorite form of Home Amusement to create an altar-cloth or some draperies which shall engross an hour or two a day of the time of the best embroideresses in the family.

The favorite symbols are these : The Cross in its various forms ; the monogram composed of the Greek letters X (*Ch*) and P (*R*), the first two in the name of CHRIST ; the Apocalyptic letters A and Ω (*Alpha* and *Omega*), often combined into a monogram ; and the Greek characters ΙΗΣ, the first three letters in the name ΙΗΣΟΥΣ (*JESUS*). This last symbol is sometimes interpreted thus, in Latin : *J[esus], H[ominum] S[alvator]*—JESUS, OF MEN THE SAV-  
IOUR.



Less frequent is the Fish, which was often used by the early Christians as a kind of secret sign of their faith, the reason being that ΙΧΘΥΣ, the Greek word for “fish,” contains the initials of an article of their creed, thus : Ι[ησοῦς] Χ[ριστὸς], Θ[εοῦ] Υ[ιὸς], Σ[ωτὴρ]—*Jesus Christ, God's Son, the Saviour*.

Besides the foregoing, we have the Ship, indicating the Church, as typified by Noah's Ark ; the Anchor (always in close connection with the ship) entwined with a dolphin—emblems of Fortitude, Faith, and Hope ; the Dove, occasionally bearing the olive-branch—the symbol of Christian Charity and Meekness ; the Phoenix and the Peacock—sym-



bols of Eternity ; the Cock of Watchfulness ; the Lyre of the Worship of God ; the Palm-branch—the heathen symbol of Victory, but in a Christian sense that of Victory over Death ; the Sheaf ; the Bunch of Grapes, with other Biblical signs and allusions, such as the Hart at the Brook ; the Brazen Serpent ; the Ark of the Covenant ; the Seven-branched Candlestick ; the Serpent in the Garden of Eden ; and, lastly, the Cross, with flowers, with a Crown, with a dove hovering about it. Many of these decorative symbols suggest themselves to the contemplative mind, and enter into the appropriate designs for ecclesiastical embroidery.

This embroidery must be beautifully executed to be worthy of its mission. The face of Christ has been so exquisitely wrought by some devout embroideresses that it is like a painting. The work should be done in a frame, and after considerable study.

And how pleasant a study for a winter evening becomes the universal subject of symbolism ! We learn that the Eagle and the Thunderbolt were the symbols of Power under pagan mythology, because the attributes of the highest among the gods. The Rod, with the two serpents, indicated Commerce, because Mercury, whose insignia they were, was the God of Traffic. The Club, the emblem of Strength, was the attribute of Hercules. The Griffin—most useful animal for all decorative purposes—was sacred to Apollo. The symbol of the Sphinx was taken from the fable of *Œdipus*. We are coming back to the Oriental method of teaching by parables in all our new internal decoration ; and for the illuminator the knowledge is priceless.

We mount up from these simpler emblems to a consideration of the myths of Niobe, of Cupid and Psyche, of Orpheus captivating the wild beasts of the forest by the sound of his lyre, in which was supposed to lurk an analogy of the history of our Lord. Then we come down to the materialism of the ancients, by which a river is symbolized

by a river-god ; a city, by a goddess with a mural crown ; night, by a female figure with a torch and a star-bespangled robe ; heaven, by a male figure throwing a veil in an arched form over his head. All these reflections, born of study and leading to it, are brought in by the practical application now made in embroidery, painting, and wall-decorations ; and it would be well if, among the Home Amusements, these graver studies went hand in hand with the pleasant duties of embroidery and illuminating cards and books.

Ole Bull says that he arrived at his wonderful effects upon the violin less by manual practice than by meditation. It would be well to *think* much over the subject of art. He *practiced* less and *thought* more, it is said, than other violinists. No occupation conduces more to quiet and pleasant thought than that of embroidery. We want realism ; but we also want idealism. There is no sort of doubt that Art, once admitted as a friend of the family, becomes the greatest instigator of all sorts of Home Amusements, whether peeping out through the paint-box, the needle, the embroidering-frame, the etching tool, or the turpentine-bottle and the mineral paints which are to decorate the plaque. Art is a sprite whose acquaintance should be cultivated.



## IX.

### ETCHING.

“GOOD etching is the poetry of drawing, written down rapidly in short-hand.” No doubt many a very orderly mamma, who has had a son or daughter afflicted with a mania for etching, as so many young people are now, has a vision of bath-tubs misappropriated to mixtures of what looked very unlike clear water for cleansing purposes, and which turned out to have plates of copper inside waiting for a bite of acid. Such mammas will blame us for calling this a Home Amusement; they call it—it is to be feared—“a Nuisance.” And yet what form of Art is so near the highest forms of poetry? The etcher is next door to his subject and his public. He has but the ink and himself between that cloud-shadow and them.

Etching is defined by some writers as the stenography of artistic thought; a system of short-hand writing. Given a copper plate, an etching-needle, and the proper knowledge—easily learned—of the action of the acid, and etching can be done at home as well as crochet or embroidery; and as only the simplest lines and the simplest curves are admissible, the question of merit narrows itself to one of intelligent combination. The best etching is that which combines the maximum of speed with the maximum of expressional clearness; so that the landscape may be written on a “monument less perishable than brass,” while the thought is fresh and vivid. An artist can see in the

short-hand of an etching the glory of a sunset amid its clouds.

Highly-elaborated drawings can also be reproduced by etchings as in no other way, as we have learned by consulting the Magazines and Art Periodicals of the day ; and although a great etcher must have a genius for it, many without genius can learn the art. An etching is not a skeleton of a picture, but a *résumé*. Samuel Palmer, Frederic Taylor, and Hook, in England ; Jules Jacquemart, Flameny, Rajou, Boilvin, Le Rat, Hédouin, Greux, Courtey, Laguillermie, and others, in France, have taught us what a beautiful *résumé* it is, not to speak of our own gifted interpreters. The original etchers can produce strong sentiment concerning life and nature ; and although there is at first discouraging uncertainty about results, yet there is a great chance of success.

And the capriciousness of the thing is one of its charms, as it is, like poetic expression, dependable upon personal thought and feeling. It is like the success which attends upon a happy hit in poetry when one makes a good etching, yet a certain amount of mechanical exactitude can always be acquired. Let the boys and girls of a large family be taught etching, and some one will turn out a clever and, perhaps, a first-rate etcher.

It is quite too unfortunate that our young girls in the country do not take more to sketching from Nature, and to water-color. To sit at one's window, and, with a "few telling touches," to give the trees in the near foreground or the distant reach of the river, is the every-day amusement of many an English lady. Our first efforts must be labored, of course ; we must patiently observe and copy what we see ; but then comes the attainment of ease, and our Home Amusements are infinitely enriched. It is best to study at first in single tint until one gets accustomed to form, and then to try varied colors.

The mastery of the three primary colors—yellow, red, and blue—is the Alpha and Omega of painting. As force of color is only to be obtained by opposing one of these singly to all the others combined, they are consequently all present whenever opposition occurs ; and no picture is perfectly pleasing without the presence of all three, even though they may be subdued to the most solemn and sober undertones. Try the effect of mixing the various colors, and preserve the mixtures you find most useful. But this is an art which must be learned, and for the elucidation of which we have no space here.

## LAWN TENNIS.

AND now we come to what, perhaps, our readers may imagine we might have come to before—the out-of-door Games and Amusements which radiate from Home.

Lawn Tennis is so preëminently the game of the present moment that we must give it a central place in our volume.

It has great antiquity, of course. What fashionable game has not? Did not Agrippina play at croquet, and Cleopatra institute “Les Graces”? We know that Diana started archery, for isn’t she always drawn with a bow? And yet she died an old maid.

The Greeks styled court tennis as “*Sphairistike*,” and the Romans called it *Pila*. It was the fashionable pastime of French and English kings. Charles V, of France, and Henry V, VII, and VIII, of England, were all good tennis players. Who does not remember the insult which the French king put upon royal Harry?

“Tennis balls! My lord?”

It has been justly described as one of the most ancient games in Christendom. It became in England the exclusive sport of the wealthy, owing to the expense of erecting and maintaining covered courts; for in early days we learn that it was always played within doors. Indeed, the history of France is full of it. The unhappy Charles IX gave the order for the massacre of St. Bartholomew from a tennis court. The French Revolution was born in one.

But to Major Walter Wingfield do we owe Lawn Tennis. This officer, of the First Dragoon Guards, attempted, unsuccessfully, in 1874, to procure a patent for a new game. He had taken the net out of doors, and no longer did four walls encompass the players. A little pamphlet is in existence now which fully establishes the claim of this officer to the rightful title of inventor of lawn tennis. It is called "The Major's Game of Lawn Tennis; dedicated to the party assembled at Nautelywdjin, December, 1873, by W. C. W.," and is illustrated with an elaborate pictorial diagram, containing a sketch of a lawn tennis court, erected in a pretty garden. The only difference appreciable to a modern player in the appearance of the court is that on one side it is divided into two squares, and that on the other the server stands in a diamond-shaped space. With slight exceptions, the game remains as it did when Major Wingfield invented it.

Now, in 1881, as in the days of Henry III, of England (about 1222), it is a favorite with people of superior rank, well befitting the tastes of the nobility, in the performance of which they could exercise a commendable zeal, as also their whole physique; that is to say, it is the fashion. The name undoubtedly comes from Tennois, in the French district of Champagne, where balls are manufactured, and where, it is claimed, the game was first introduced.

A lawn, well clipped and evenly rolled, is the first requirement. The courts should be laid rectangularly. The game should be gotten up with reference to the wind, the net being set at right angles with it. Thus will be avoided the tendency of air currents to carry the balls off or beyond the bounds; and the play will be then against or with the wind. In either case its influence can be more accurately calculated.

The lines of boundary and division should be indicated

upon the greensward by means of whitewash, carefully laid on with brush and string. The larger or double court should be seventy-eight feet long by a width of thirty-six feet, inside measure; and the smaller or single-handed court seventy-eight by twenty-seven feet, inside measurement. As in the old game of tennis, so in this, the court is divided across the middle and at right angles to its greatest length by a net, so stretched and fastened to and by two posts, standing three feet outside of the side lines, that the height of the net at each post for the double-handed or larger court is four feet, and in the middle over the half-court line three feet six inches; and for the single-handed or smaller court four feet nine inches at the posts, and three feet in the middle over the half-court line. These divisions are termed courts, and are subdivided into half-courts by a line midway between the side lines, and running parallel with the greatest length, which is known as the half-court line. The four resulting half-courts are respectively divided by a line on each side of the net, parallel to and twenty-two feet from it. These two lines, called service lines, it may be observed, will then be seventeen feet inside of the lines of boundary for the short sides, known as base lines.

The implements comprise net, posts, cordage, balls, and rackets. The net should be taut, the posts straight, the ball hollow, of India-rubber, covered with white cloth; in size, two inches and a half; weight, two ounces. The racket is made with a frame of elastic wood, with a webbing nicely wrought of catgut. The large-sized rackets made at Philadelphia and in London are the best.

The players don a costume of flannel for the purpose, wearing shoes of canvas with corrugated rubber soles, without heels. Indeed, a chapter might be written on lawn-tennis dresses, aprons, and other fancies. But these—so they are loose and easy, and not long or cumbrous—may be left to the fancy of the individual.



The choice of sides and the right of serving are left to the chance of toss, with the proviso that if the winner of the toss choose the right to serve, the other player shall have the choice of sides, or *vice versa*.

There are double-handed, three-handed, and four-handed games, each having some variations. In the double-handed game the players stand on opposite sides of the net. The player who first delivers the ball is called the server, and the other the striker-out. The first game having been played, these interchange; the server becomes the striker-out, and the striker-out the server; and so alternately in subsequent games of the set. The server usually announces the intention to serve by the interrogation "Ready?" If answered affirmatively, the service is made, the server standing with one foot outside the base line, and from any part of the base line of the right and left counts alternately, beginning with the right.

The ball so served is required to drop within the service line, half-court line, and side line of the court which is diagonally opposite to that from which it was served, where the service from the base line must fall to be a service. If the ball served drops on or beyond the service line, if it drops in the net, if it drops out of the court, or on any of the lines which bound it, or if it drops in the wrong court, or, if in attempting to serve, the server fails to strike the ball, it is a "fault." A fault can not be taken, but the ball must be served the second time from the same court from which the fault was served.

Though the service is made if the striker-out is not ready, the service shall be repeated, unless an attempt is made to return the service on the part of the striker-out; which action shall be construed to be equivalent to having been ready. No service is allowed to be "volleyed"; that is, the striker-out is not allowed to return a service while the ball is "on the fly," or before a "bounce." If such



a return of service is made, it counts a stroke for the server.

To properly return a service, and have the ball in play, the ball is to be played back over the net or between the posts before it has touched the ground a second time, or while on the "first bounce," and is subject to no bounds other than the side and base lines of the court. After the ball is in play, it may be struck while "on the fly," but policy would dictate a bounce to determine whether or not it has been played beyond the boundaries of the court. A ball served, or in play, may touch the net, and be a good service or return. If it touches the top cord it is termed a "let," a "life," or a "net" ball, and need not be played if it drops just inside the net, on the striker-out side, but must be served again. Should it fall on the service side, or in the wrong court on the striker-out side, or out of bounds, it counts a "fault." If, however, it falls so as to be a good return, in any stage of the game other than service, it must be played as a good ball. In play, if the striker-out volleys the service, or the ball in play, or fails to return the service or the ball in play, or returns the service or the ball in play so that it drops untouched by the server, on or outside of any of the lines which bound the court, or if the striker-out otherwise loses a stroke, as we will find presently, when we consider the conditions common to both server and striker-out, the server wins a stroke.

In the handling of the racket the greatest dexterity may be attained by careful study and practice. The twist ball is a feature of the game which good players utilize to the greatest advantage. The uncertainty of its bounces is calculated to outwit the most adroit.

Since, under certain conditions of failure on the part of the striker-out, the advantage in count of a stroke comes to the server, so, too, the striker-out reaps a harvest if

the server serves two consecutive faults, or if the server fails to return the ball in play, or if the server returns the ball in play so that it drops untouched by the striker-out on or outside any of the lines which bound the court, or if the server loses a stroke under conditions common to both server and striker-out, in any of which cases the striker-out wins a stroke. There are conditions under which each player loses a stroke: If the service-ball, or ball in play, touches the player, or anything worn or carried by him, except the racket in the act of striking; or if the player strikes or touches the service-ball, or ball in play, with the racket more than once; or if in returning the service-ball, or ball in play, the player touches the net with any part of the body, or with the racket, or with anything that is worn or carried; or if the ball touches either of the posts; so if the player strikes the ball before it has passed the net, or if the service-ball, or ball in play, drops or falls upon a ball lying in either of the players' courts. So much for the conditions under which the players, either server or striker-out, win or lose a stroke.

As for scoring, there are two systems, each of which has its adherents. Both should be understood, and the more thoroughly the player understands both, the more at ease will he be in any company with whom he may be playing.

The first plan is this: The first stroke won counts for the player, winning a score of fifteen; the second stroke won by the same player counts for that player an additional score of fifteen, making a total of thirty; the third stroke won counts for him an additional ten, making the score forty. Unless there is a tie of forty, the fourth stroke won by that player entitles him to score game. If, however, both players have won three strokes, the score is called *deuce*, and so on until at the score of *deuce* either player

wins two consecutive strokes, when the game is scored for that player. Six games constitute a "set," and the player who first wins them wins the set, unless in case both players win five games, when the score is called "games-all," and the next game won by either player is scored advantage game for that player. If the same player wins the next game he wins the set. If he loses the next game, the score is again called "games-all"; and so on until at the score of games-all either player wins two consecutive games, when he wins the set. An exception to this is where an agreement is entered into not to play advantage sets, but to decide the set by one game after arriving at the score of games-all. In this mode of scoring both the server and the striker-out are entitled to count, while in the "alternative method" it is different.

An alternative method of scoring is as follows, in which the term "hand-in" is substituted for "server," and "hand-out" for "striker-out." In this system the hand-in alone is able to score. If he loses a stroke he becomes hand-out, and his opponent becomes hand-in, and serves his turn. Fifteen points won constitutes the game. If both players have won fourteen points, the game is set to three, and the score called "love-all." The hand-in continues to serve, and the player who first scores three points wins the game. If he or his partner loses a stroke, the other side shall be hand-in. During the remainder of the game, when the first hand-in has been put out, his partner shall serve, beginning from the court from which the last service was not delivered, and when both partners have been put out, then the other side shall be hand-in.

The *hand-in* shall deliver the service in accordance with the restrictions mentioned for the server, and the opponents shall receive the service alternately, each keeping the court which he originally occupied. In all subsequent strokes the ball may be returned by either partner on each side.

The privilege of being hand-in two or more successive times may be given.

What has been said of double-handed games applies equally well to the three-handed and four-handed games, except that in the three-handed game the single player shall serve in every alternate game; in the four-handed game the pair who have the right to serve in the first game may decide which partner shall do so, and the opposing pair may decide similarly for the second game. The partner of the player who served in the first game shall serve in the third, and the partner of the player who served in the second game shall serve in the fourth, and so on. In the same order, in all the subsequent games of a set or series of sets, the players shall take the service alternately throughout each game.

No player shall receive or return a service delivered to his partner; and the order of service and of striking-out once arranged, shall not be altered; nor shall the strikers-out change courts to receive the service before the end of the set. The players change sides at the end of every set. When a series of sets is played, the player who was server in the last game of one set shall be striker-out in the first game of the next.

A *Bisque* is one stroke which may be claimed by the receiver of the odds at any time during a set, except that a bisque may not be taken after the service has been delivered. The server may not take a bisque after a fault, but the striker-out may do so. One or more bisques may be given in augmentation or diminution of other odds.

*Half-fifteen* is one stroke given at the beginning of the second and every subsequent alternate game of a set.

*Fifteen* is one stroke given at the beginning of every game of a set.

*Half-thirty* is one stroke given at the beginning of the first game, two strokes given at the beginning of the second

game, and so on alternately in all the subsequent games of a set.

*Thirty* is two strokes given at the beginning of every game of a set.

*Half-forty* is two strokes given at the beginning of the first game, three strokes at the beginning of the second, and so on alternately in all the subsequent games of the set.

*Forty* is three strokes given at the beginning of every game of a set.

*Half-court* is when the players having agreed into which court the giver of the odds of half-court shall play, the latter loses a stroke if the ball returned by him drops outside any of the lines which bound that court.

If the game is to be umpired, there should be one for each side of the net, who shall call play at the beginning of a game, enforce the rules, and be sole judge of fair and unfair play, each on his respective side of the net.

We have followed the best manual and the best opinions of the most successful players in the above lengthy abstract for the use of many who may be confused by the very absurd and contradictory rules published in the newspapers. These rules of ours are those which were used at Newport, at the Casino, during the famous Lawn Tournament of 1880, which was so very interesting, and in which the victors were rewarded by prizes, from Mr. Bennett, of silver pitchers, bracelets, and rings of great value; and which shows that the game of lawn tennis deserved the high encomiums pronounced by Henry III on court tennis. It is a game of science; it does exercise every part of the body; and it requires skill, good temper, staying power, judgment, and activity.

Of course, few groups at home will play with the science and skill displayed in these tournaments; yet the rules of the game should be thoroughly learned, and those who

play scientifically will avoid those contentions and disputes which spoil any game.

It is better in giving a lawn-tennis party not to invite any but those who really are devotees of the game. As to others, the absorption of the players makes the party stupid.



## XI.

### GARDEN PARTIES.

A GARDEN PARTY is a scene of enchantment, to which the lawn-tennis net lends an additional grace and variety.

A lady, living near a city, who chooses to inaugurate the season with a garden party, sends her invitations a week in advance, and carefully incloses a card telling her guests by what roads, railway trains, and boats she may be reached. There must be no confusion or lack of carriages at the end of the route. This hospitality must cover everything. If the weather is fine and the distance short, ladies generally drive to these entertainments in gay dresses and bonnets or hats; for a garden party should look as much like a Watteau as possible. Those who have had the advantage of seeing a garden party in England—at Holland House, or at Buckingham Palace—will remember how beautiful, finished, and gay a scene it is. A dressy parasol and a fan hung at the side are indispensable. Ladies go either in the short Amazonian dresses which the practice of games has made so fashionable, or else in Worth's last and most elegant trailing costumes, trusting to the grass being dry, and knowing that they can sit on the piazza.

Most garden-party givers provide band music, which plays either in the grand hall, or at some spot on the lawn where dancing can go on. But our turf is not like the English turf, and modern dancing is not that springing measure of "young Bertine," as she bounds under the wal-



nut-trees of Southern France. So we can not count in dancing as one of the usual pleasures of a garden party, unless a broad platform is laid ; and this has in its way a very pretty effect under the trees or in a large tent.

A garden party is for all ages ; so there should be in our uncertain climate full provision for the elderly, who can not always spend an afternoon on the lawn. Broad piazzas are very useful, and much enjoyed by those who fear our treacherous malarious soil ; and if one can not exercise, it is better to sit on a piazza than on the grass.

As it is always prone to rain at picnics and garden parties, it is better to have the refreshments in the house. Gentlemen can run into the banquet-hall and get a plate of lobster-salad for a lady, or the waiters can carry the refreshments about ; but for a sudden shower of rain to descend on a table is miserable, and defeats the object of the table.

The lady of the house, however, often improvises a hasty roof or covering for her table, put up by the carpenter at a small outlay, if she is determined to have everything *al fresco*. Frozen coffee, iced tea, punch, ice-cream croquets, salads, jellies, pressed turkey, potted meats, *pâté de foie gras*, and sandwiches, are spread about. Do not attempt any hot dishes at a garden party ; they are out of place, and impossible.

The garden party is said to be "the first hybrid which unites society and nature." It is a growing taste with us Americans, and will grow to be a greater favorite as time goes on. The popularity of the game of archery, that relic of Robin Hood and Maid Marion, "that vision of Lincoln green," is now added to lawn tennis, croquet, and "*les Graces*," as one of the most popular features of a garden party. One would think that there was nothing needed but the long sweep of the trees upon the lawn, the vision of the distant city, the flower-beds where geraniums and

calceolaria vie in color, the "pleached alley," the buttercup in the grass, the Watteau-like picture, or groups of gay ladies and gallant cavaliers causing "unpremeditated effects" to make the garden party agreeable. But there is always a need of preparation for such a party. No lady should trust alone to the power of her guests to amuse themselves. She must do all that she can.

In the country a lady can wait for a day of fine weather, and invite her guests only the day before. The grounds and garden walks, the lawn tennis, the archery, should all be in order, and a few chairs out under the trees. It is not long before all her guests begin to enjoy themselves in their own way, and to appreciate how much better a room is made by the Gothic arch of the trees than by any sort of cramped-up house arrangement.

One can be more general in the invitations to a garden party than to any other; for if people like each other they can group together, and if they do not, they can easily walk apart, and get rid of each other. In a small room, particularly at a dinner party, how two people can glow and glare at each other, to the dreadful dismay of the hostess! But at a garden party Nature is too wide for them. They are almost obliged to seem amused whether they are or not. If not at all amused, they can, however, go and sulk under the lilacs. Those fragrant vegetables will not care whether the guests sulk or smile.

Every country house has its charms. How lovely a garden party can be given at the Locusts, when all those trees are in flower, sending down the perfume of Araby the Blest! How the perfume reminds one of St. John's Gardens, Oxford, when the lime-trees are in bloom, and every bough is laden with wild bees who make a music as they sip! A flowering tree is the most perfect thing which Adam and Eve saved from Paradise. One seems, in inhaling its fragrance, to have just recovered from a long illness.

The best part of a spring or early summer garden party is this first whiff of fragrance which is brought to the dis-used or insulted nostril of the city. We little know until then how the most aristocratic of the senses has been wronged. We are always, and all of us, most patient over our city bad smells until we go into the country and realize what a bath of delicious odors a forest is—a bit of woodland, a field of growing grass, one sweet cherry-tree, an apple-blossom, a violet! The perfume of lilacs is the perfume of luxury; and the first scythe of the mower, as it sweeps through the young blood of the grass, reveals a thousand scent-bottles all uncorked for our use. A lady in giving a garden party should always have a bundle of new-mown hay somewhere about the grounds.

And at the garden party what may not those who sit on the benches remember? All the sprightly, frivolous, charming figures who seem to have posed for us at garden parties in France! Philippe d'Orléans and La Phalaris; the Duc de Richelieu and the Abbess de Chelles; Watteau, Voltaire, Carmargo; Louis XV, with Pompadour and Du Barry; Boucher and Vanloo; Greuze, Voisenon, and Bernis; Guimaud and Sophie Arnould; Crébillon, the tragic, and Dancourt, the gay! What a faithful study of naiads and hamadryads did the beautiful women of these days suggest to the artists at those garden parties when, toward the end of spring, the trees were in blossom, and the enameled grass carpeted the parks! Madame de Pompadour asked Louis XV to come and see her hermitage! Venus, Hebe, Diana the huntress, the three Graces—all were in order! The garden itself a masterpiece of attraction—a wood, rather than a garden—a wood peopled with statues, formed of verdant and odorous arcades, of charming groves, of dark, shaded retreats. Such was the *Parc aux Cerfs*.

We think again of the rose-tree of Jean Jacques at the

hermitage. We remember Dufresny, who “studied love in his heart, grandeur at the court, war upon the field of battle, architecture in the erection of buildings, *nature in his garden*, music in song.” Dufresny was in love with gardens. A poet, a friend of Louis XIV, he loved roses better than any other luxury. It was he who broke up the stiff, old-fashioned plan of gardening at Vincennes, and introduced Nature with her charming caprices and fairy fantasies. It was he who said, “Cultivating roses, marking out paths, planting hedges, is the same as writing sonnets, songs, and poems.” In his day a picturesque garden was often called “*à la Dufresny*.” Under his rule Versailles became what it is. “I shall never be poor while I have a garden!” said he to the King. “I find there the green vine-tendrils, or the roses, for a crown.” To him verdant prospects were real terrestrial paradises.

We can remember how the boy Florian gathered cherries, and forgot his Greek and Latin! We remember him, in Voltaire’s garden, naming the poppies after the faithless Trojans. The most beautiful he called “Hector,” and then demolished him with a blow from his wooden sword. Later, when he had grown up, still wandering in gardens, he wrote his eclogues, poems, dramas, fables, and “Numa Pompilius.” His style has all the tender freshness, the brilliancy, the perfume, the clear color, of a “garden party.” It is an idyl of primroses and dandelions.

We hardly think of Buffon at a garden party. (When Voltaire heard of his “Natural History”—“Not so *natural*,” said the great wit.) The laborious and tranquil life of the great author of the “Garden of Plants” seems out of place at a garden party, and yet he lived and wrote in a garden. He submitted Nature to a crucible, and tore a lily to pieces to see of what it was made; and yet he brought together the flowers and trees of all nations. We admire, but do not love Buffon.

We cross the Channel and see, in imagination, the Princess Anne with Lady Castlemaine and Miss Stuart, Lady Churchill, and all their friends, loftily walking in the groves and alleys of Spring Gardens, emerging into St. James's Park. The glories of Bird-Cage Walk come back to us. From these models did Colley Cibber get his "Lady Betty Modish," and what a pretty, stylish, affected model it was! Lovely Lady Fitzhardinge was of the Princess's party, and later, when Lady Churchill became Duchess of Marlborough, what garden parties at Blenheim!

A garden party always brings back Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who left many an account of those stately old-time gardens at Rome, Florence, Naples, Genoa, Avignon—not to speak of the early adventures at Twickenham, and later at Strawberry Hill. All England is a garden. The garden party is possible anywhere.

And the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire and Mrs. Crewe! How they adorn a garden party! We almost see the splendid cream-colored horses of George III drive up past Carleton Gardens, to proceed in solemn state to St. James's, as we hear the low, rippling laughter of the two beauties in brocade.

The Prince of Wales forgot his two hundred thousand pounds of debts as he received the Buffs and Blues at a garden party, which began at noon and continued all night, at Carleton House. The Duchess of Devonshire was then lady paramount of the aristocratic whig circles, in which rank and literature were blended with political aspirations. It was she who canvassed for Fox, and allowed the butcher to kiss her for his vote; and to her was paid the compliment, highly prized, by the link-boy who asked if he "might light his pipe at her eyes." These women seem to have lived in garden parties.

Sweet Madame de Sévigné, with her children, at *Les Rochers*, and later at Paris, talking gayly under the trees



of her garden, with Corneille, Racine, Molière, La Fontaine, and Boileau, again wins us back across the Channel, and back a hundred years or so.

Garden parties have this advantage : they are like Madame de Staël's age—"not dated." They are of all time. Madame de Sévigné's garden party comprised Pascal, Bourdaloue, Mascaron, Bossuet, the restless De Retz, the Scotchman Montrose, La Rochefoucauld, Marshal Turenne, Le Grand Colbert, and Condé. The ladies were the Duchess de Longueville, the political *intrigante* of the Fronde ; the penitent La Vallière ; the heartless Maintenon ; Madame de Montespan ; the Comtesse d'Olonne, daughter of Madame de Rambouillet, and one of the *Précieuses* ; Madame de La Fayette, the authoress of "*Zaïde*." Alas, and alas ! we could not get together such a garden party of to-day ! No ! not if we had a fortnight's time before us, and all the wealth of the Indies.

Madame de Sévigné was that delightful combination—a beauty, a wit, and a *femme d'esprit*. As an instance of the flattery to which even genius stooped in speaking to a monarch who loved flattery and adulation more than anything, she relates an answer made by Racine to Louis XIV when that sovereign expressed his regret that the poet had not accompanied the army in its last campaign. "Sire," said Racine, "we had none but town-clothes, and had ordered others to be made ; but the places you attacked were all taken before they could be finished." "This," adds Madame de Sévigné, "was well received."

It is in her famous correspondence with her daughter that we find many an account of a garden party, or a *fête*, which we should gladly have seen, and which at our own garden parties we are glad to remember. Her letters contain much talk on books, religion, philosophy, and politics ; on the frowns and smiles of the great monarch ; the favor accorded to this courtier, the disgrace of that ; the mar-

riage contracted, the *bons mots* circulated. But it is upon society that she is strongest. She loved nature, too, in a Frenchwoman's way. When she walked the garden of her uncle, the Abbé, at Livry, or far away in the solitudes of Brittany, she rejoiced in the song of the nightingale, in the change of the leaf, in the glad freshness of the air. She is a poet, without meaning it. Her garden-party letters are her best letters.

Very stately must have been those garden parties at Wilton, when Ben Jonson and Philip Massinger afforded amusement to the intellectual great. The Masque, an entertainment of the rich and noble in the time of Elizabeth and James I, called out the powers of these men. The actors were people of the highest class, sometimes royal personages, the masques always in the open air. Dancing and music were introduced. These various actors learned their parts under the tutorship of the Master of the Revels. Lawes composed music, to which the poetry of Jonson was sung; and the scenes, decorations, and dresses were contrived and executed by Inigo Jones. Certain great families copied the example of the court, and ordered masques to be written, and played at their own country-seats; calling in for the choruses the children of the Chapel Royal, who were regularly trained to take their part in masques. At Wilton, at Belvoir Castle, at Whitehall, at Windsor, these charming but costly diversions were carried on. Ben Jonson might have been heard scolding and working over these garden parties at the house of the beautiful Mary Sidney, sister to the author of the "Arcadia," who was afterward Countess of Pembroke. She often gave these entertainments at Wilton. She there received Queen Elizabeth, Walter Raleigh, the Earl of Essex, Will Shakespeare, Spenser, and Cecil. Philip Massinger was in her servants' hall, a humble retainer. The pious Countess, for her solemn hours, had Dr. Donne, most devoted of servitors. The



death of her noble brother, Philip Sidney, broke her heart, and there were no more garden parties at Wilton. We all know how Walter Scott has described these garden parties in "Kenilworth." Indeed, they make us rather out of love with our later attempts.

Once in our own land a masque was attempted, the famous *Mischianza* of Major André, on the Delaware, at Philadelphia. Had not he and Arnold gone out together in that rather sad way, we might like to tell of that garden party, but we will skip it.

After all, man was born, the race was started, in a garden. Adam and Eve held the first garden party. What a pity that the serpent crawled in !

## XII.

### DANCING.

DANCING is so well known to all young people as a Home Amusement that it seems perhaps *banale* to describe it. A glance at the dances now fashionable may, however, not be out of place.

From the Virginia Reel to the German Cotillon is indeed a bound. Our grandfathers were taught to dance the Pirouette, the delicate Pigeon-wing—indeed, all the paces of the dance such as it was when Vestris bounded before Louis XVI. When commanded to dance before him, the dancer loftily replied: “The House of Vestris has always danced for that of Bourbon.”

Dancing then was an accomplishment. Who does not recollect seeing some grandfather still “taking his steps”? Now at the most is permitted the Galop, which has the needed element of jollity without coarseness. It is *l'allegro* of the ballroom. The Gambrinus Polka also lights up the ballroom occasionally. With these vivacious exceptions, dancing is reduced to the Waltz—*la valse à trois temps*—the various steps of which consist of the Hop-Waltz, the Glide-Waltz, the Redowa, and the Waltz proper. The Boston “Dip,” the “Racket,” and the “Society,” are spurious. They are not taught by the best dancing masters. They are “rowdy,” but some people, desirous of notoriety, do dance them at the Charity Ball. As a famous dancing authority observes, “Did such a style of dancing prevail,

dancing must go down ; its enemies would have unanswerable arguments against it." The dance of society is now quiet, easy, natural, modest, and graceful. Those who would make it otherwise must remember that they are copying the excesses of the *Bal Mabilie*.

The spurious dances mentioned above are ridiculed in "Punch" as the "pivotal" dances. The Redowa is a pretty form of the Waltz. It is composed of a step known as the *pas de basque*. Its movements are indicated as a *fête à glissé* and a *coupé dessous* ; the feet, however, are never raised from the floor.

The Galop is a great favorite with the Swedes, Danes, and Russians ; it has a Viking force in it ; while the Redowa reminds one of the graceful Viennese, who dance it so well. The Mazourka, danced to the wild Polish Mazourka measure, is a more poetical dance, and has many a poem written to its honor ; but it rarely appears seen at a fancy-dress ball.

The German Cotillon, born many years ago in a Viennese palace to meet the requirements of court etiquette, is now the favorite dance at home and at balls, as a way of finishing the evening. Its favors, beginning with flowers, ribbons, and bits of tinsel, have ripened into fans, bracelets, gold scarf-pins, and pencil-cases, and many other things even more expensive. Favors now often cost \$5,000 for one fashionable ball. So the German, thus conducted, can scarcely be called a Home Amusement.

To dance by the firelight to the music of the piano is a *Home Amusement*. And if there be a good old kitchen, with a hard floor, into which a negro fiddler can be introduced, and where the *contra-danse* can be also added, and the evening can end with Virginia Reel—this is a Home Amusement. The old-fashioned quadrilles, the Lancers—dances in which old and young can join—these are home dances !

“There is something so *conscientious* about papa’s dancing,” said a profane youth who was watching his estimable parent through the decidedly complicated mazes of Money Musk. Youth will always laugh at age when it attempts the accomplishments. That is a real dance, however, when papa, mamma, and the children all join in, and when Jane, aged seven, leads out grandpa. How Dickens luxuriates in Mr. Fizziwig’s dancing at the Christmas supper in the “Christmas Carol”! Dickens could never have made the “*German*” so pathetic or so funny!

All fashion polishes off the edges, and causes an aristocratic icing to form over the outside of any expression of jollity; so no wonder that fashionable dancing has become a *glissé*. It would not be well to attempt any gay dancing at a fashionable ball—that would look like romping; but surely in the old kitchen, in the private parlor, at Christmas, on birthdays, one is allowed to romp a little.

The German is a dance of infinite variety, and a leader of original fancy constructs new figures constantly. The Waltz, Galop, Redowa, and Polka steps occur in its many changes. There is a slow walk in the quadrille figures; a stately march; the bows and courtesies of the old minuet; and, above all, the *tour de valse*, which is the means of locomotion from place to place. The changeful exigencies of the various figures lead the forty or fifty or the two hundred people to meet, exchange greetings, dance with each other, change their geographical position many times; and the Grand Army of the Republic did not have a more varied scope.

The Kaleidoscope is one of the prettiest figures. The four couples perform a *tour de valse*, then form as for a quadrille; the next four couples in order take positions behind the first four couples, each of the latter couples facing the same as the couples in front. At a signal from the leader, the ladies of the inner couples cross right hands,

move entirely round, and turn into places by giving left hands to their partners ; at the same time the outer couples waltz half round to opposite places. At another signal, the inner couples waltz entirely round, and finish facing outward ; at the same time the outer couples *chassé croisé*, and turn at corners with right hands, then *dechassé*, and turn partners with left hands. *Valse générale* with *vis-à-vis*.

Another pretty figure is *La Corbeille, l'Anneau, et la Fleur*. The first couple performs a *tour de valse*, after which the gentleman presents the lady with a little basket containing a ring and a flower, then resumes his seat. The lady presents the ring to one gentleman, the flower to another, and the basket to a third. The gentleman to whom she presents the ring selects a partner for himself ; the gentleman who receives the flower dances with the lady who presents it, while the other gentleman holds the basket in his hand and dances alone. Counterpart for the others in their order.

*Le Miroir* is another very pretty figure. The first couple performs a *tour de valse*. The gentleman seats his lady upon a chair in the middle of the room, and presents her with a small mirror. The leader then selects a gentleman from the circle, and conducts him behind her chair. The lady looks in the mirror, and if she decline the partner offered, by turning the mirror over or shaking her head, the leader continues to offer partners until the lady accepts. The gentlemen refused return to their seats, or select partners and join in the *valse*.

*Le Cavalier Trompé* is another favorite figure. Five or six couples perform a *tour de valse*. They afterward place themselves in ranks of two, one couple behind the other. The lady of the first gentleman leaves him, and seeks a gentleman of another column. While this is going on, the first gentleman must not look behind him. The first lady

and the gentleman whom she has selected separate and advance on tiptoe on each side of the column, in order to deceive the gentleman at the head, and endeavor to join each other for a waltz. If the first gentleman is fortunate enough to seize his lady, he leads off in a waltz. If not, he must remain at his post until he is able to take a lady. The last gentleman remaining dances with the last lady.

*Les Chaînes Continues* is another good figure. The first four couples perform a *tour de valse*. Each gentleman chooses a lady, and each lady a gentleman. The gentlemen place themselves in line, and the ladies form a line opposite. The first gentleman on the left gives his right hand to the right hand of his lady, and turns entirely around with her. He gives his left hand to the left hand of the next lady, while his lady does the same with the next gentleman. The gentleman and lady again meet, and turn with right hands, and then turn with left hands the third lady and gentleman, and so on to the last couple. As soon as the leader and his lady reach the fourth couple, the second couple should start, so that there may be a continuous chain between the ladies and gentlemen. When all have regained their original places in line, they terminate the figure by a *tour de valse*.

A very pretty figure, and easily furnished, is called *Les Drapeaux*. Five or six duplicate sets of small flags of national or fancy devices must be in readiness. The leader takes a flag of each pattern, and his lady the duplicates; they perform a *tour de valse*. The conductor then presents his flags to five or six ladies, and his lady presents the corresponding flags to as many gentlemen. The gentlemen then seek the ladies having the duplicates, and with them perform a *tour de valse*, waving the flags as they dance. Repeated by all the couples.

Another of the favorite combinations is *Les Rubans*. Six ribbons, each about a yard in length, and of various



colors, are attached to one end of a stick about twenty-four inches in length ; also a duplicate set of ribbons, attached to another stick, must be in readiness. The first couple perform a *tour de valse*, and then separate. The gentleman takes one set of ribbons, and stops successively in front of the ladies whom he desires to select to take part in the figure. Each of these ladies rises, and takes hold of the loose end of a ribbon. The first lady takes the other set of ribbons, bringing forward six gentlemen in the same manner. The first couple conduct the ladies and gentlemen toward each other, and each gentleman dances with the lady holding the ribbon duplicate of his own. The first gentleman dances with his partner. The figure is repeated by the other couples in their order.

To give a German, a lady should have all the furniture removed from her parlors, a crash spread over the carpet, and a set of folding-chairs introduced for the couples to sit in. The great trouble of this proceeding is what has led to the giving of Germans, in large cities, at private balls or in public places. It is considered that all taking part in a German are formally introduced, and upon no condition whatever must a lady, so long as she remains in the German, refuse to dance with any gentleman whom she may chance to receive as a partner. Every American must learn that he should speak to every one whom he meets in a friend's house, if necessary, without an introduction, as the friend's house *is* an introduction. So in the German, the very fact that *guests are there* is an introduction.

In taking a review of the German we may as well say that, in a country house, the making of the favors is a very pretty amusement. The ribbons are easily bought at the village store. The same gold-paper and tinsel which furnishes forth the private theatricals will do for the orders and insignia, and the prettiest bouquets come from the



garden. These hastily-improvised home Germans are very amusing and very pretty.

The laws of the German are, however, so strict, and so tiresome occasionally, that a good many parties have abjured it, and now dance some of its figures without a leader, and as sporadic attempts. A leader for the German needs many of the same qualities as the leader of an army. He must have a comprehensive glance, a quick ear and eye, and a very great belief in himself. He must have the talent of command, and make himself seen and felt. He must be full of resource and quick-witted. With all these qualities he must have tact. It is no easy matter to get two hundred dancers into all sorts of combinations, to get them out of it, to offend nobody, but to produce that elegant kaleidoscope which we call "the German."

The term *tour de valse* is used technically, meaning that the couple or couples performing it will execute the round dance designated by the leader once around the room. Should the room be small, they make a second tour. After the introductory *tour de valse*, care must be taken by those who perform it not to select ladies and gentlemen from each other, but from among those who are seated. When the leader claps his hands to warn those who are prolonging the *valse*, they must immediately cease dancing.

The religious objection to dancing having almost died out, we recommend all parents to have their children taught to dance. It is a necessary thing toward physical culture. It is the most embarrassing thing for a man later in life to find himself without the grace which dancing brings. Nothing contributes so much to Home Amusement as the informal dance. Nothing can be more innocent. If, in after-life, this accomplishment leads to late hours and to reckless love of pleasure, we must remember that all good things can be abused.

### XIII.

## GARDENS AND FLOWER-STANDS.

THE making of gardens is decidedly and judiciously conceded to be a Home Amusement, and it is a pity that the new fashion of bedding-out plants, which is so beautiful in our public parks and in the pleasure grounds of the rich, should have seemed to so utterly do away with a taste for the old-fashioned gardens of early English poetry—of Miss Mitford, of every sweet New England dame of the early days, who had her garden, with its “pretty posies,” and its bed of sweet marjoram, lavender, and sage. It is, however, a hopeful sign to see in remote country towns some effort to keep up the old-fashioned idea of a pretty flower-plot, and there are always women who have the gift of making flowers “blow” and grow in a quiet way.

Yet science can help to bring the old-fashioned garden to perfection, as well as to make those artificial beds of many-leaved coleus, and steadier groups. Every garden design, every project of garden furnishing, and every item of garden work, should be governed by this consideration, that it is hard work to fight against Nature, and there is seldom thus a conquest worth obtaining. Aim modestly to gain a victory over the easily-cultivated native flowers at first, and you will secure enjoyment.

Fortunately, if gardening is pursued with earnestness, every soil and every climate will be found to produce some

flowers in rare beauty and in unexpected luxuriance. Geometric plans, if well carried out, are very pretty, and the amateur gardener should learn to mass her geraniums, petunias, and pansies, her gladioli, roses, marigolds, and poppies, so as to give a good and really splendid result of color. Nature takes care to send us delicate, pale yellows and lilacs in Spring in her sweet daffy-down-dilly, and the elegant *fleurs-de-lis*; and the peonies come on mildly with pink and white before they dash into red. Then come the Turkish carpets of the portulaca, and so on until midsummer blazes with poppies, gladioli, and all the gorgeous zinnias. These may all be found in the commonest garden, without mentioning the larkspur, the mignonette, the petunia and the sweet-pea, and a thousand other charming common flowers. The delightful flowers which sow themselves, and those hardy bulbs, the crocus, tulip, lily of the valley, snowdrop, and hyacinth, should not be neglected. A quantity of white-lily bulbs stowed away in the garden reward one year after year with their elegant flowers and fragrance at no cost whatever. Pansies, daisies, and polyanthus keep from season to season, and carnation pinks need to be two years old before they will blossom, while the chrysanthemums make the garden gay in October.

Now for borders to the garden beds. Common grass is the best and easiest, as the gardener's boy can cut it with a sickle each week and keep it from spreading. Or the little, cheap mosses make a pretty border, as does the periwinkle, which looks so like myrtle. To attempt a border of the gorgeous coleus requires a hothouse and an accomplished gardener. In the common large country garden rows of hollyhocks, as against a stone wall, or marking out the long walks, are most ornamental. Dahlias also are very good in groups. Phlox, that much-abused plant, is also pretty in masses. Asters too, of many varieties, delight the eye, and are easy of culture. In trying to raise shrubs, why not take

the American wild pink, or azalea, the laurel and the rhododendron, and, by studying up their habits, capture them?

The best soil for the rhododendron is a peat containing much sand and much vegetable fiber. Any clean, pulverized product of vegetable decay will like them. It is their native food. The laurel is capricious, and resents the act of transplantation; but they will flourish if planted thick enough. They love company, and thrive in it. The best way to treat them is to study their quality, and to give them the same conditions which made them grow so luxuriantly on the hill-side.

But if even these plants resist you, every lady loves a rosarium, and it will go hard with her but she has a rose garden somewhere. The gardeners now sell one hundred rose roots for a dollar, at Rochester, and if planted out and attended to they give a million of dollars in pleasure back again.

Some ladies understand budding, and this is a very interesting process. In this way an army of sweetbriars can be covered with yellow Marshal Neills and royal Jacqueminois. To propagate by layers is, however, the easiest way, if, indeed, one does not prefer to buy them all started. For garden roses we need vigorous growers that are sure to flower freely, and will contribute to the gayety of the garden. One of the best—the old-fashioned damask—if set out well, will blossom for thirty years. A very effective garden of roses is produced by roses pegged down. A deep, rather rich, loamy soil is to be prepared, the position selected being rather open. When the plants are about a foot high peg down the strongest growths. The rose prefers a firm soil. Those who desire to have firm blooms the second season must cut off a few inches of the flowering wood as soon as the first bloom is over, and give the beds a thorough soaking of manure or sewage-water every third or fourth day.

But in this, as in every sort of cultivation of an especial flower, one should buy an especial treatise on the subject.

Every lady gardener is troubled by insect pests—the horrid green canker-worm, the little green louse, the potato-bug; these are everywhere. One fights them with all sorts of powders and all sorts of syringes. One very simple cure is not generally known. It is to plant a lettuce beside your rose; the vermin prefers the lettuce. It is the same principle which induced the rich owner of a wine-cellar to put a barrel of whisky beside his best Madeira; the whisky went, but the Madeira stayed. Dirty flower-pots, filled with dry moss, put in the neighborhood, will catch large numbers of these gentry, for vermin are fond of dirt. Dusting with powdered lime, or sulphurized tobacco-dust, will kill the insects which destroy the asters. Lettuces also save the asters, and a bed of green lettuce is not an ugly “bedding-out” plant.

No manure is so good as that common rotted vegetation of the forest. Bring a pailful home from every drive, and it will make your flowers grow. Nothing, also, so good as this for that lovely flower, the pansy, which thus recalls its early start in the forest. The pansy does not require much water, but in very hot, dry weather the beds should be sprinkled at night with a watering-pot.

But these few directions may seem impertinent, as every lady has now the most ample means of reading up about her garden. The cultivation of a few flowers in the house—window gardening—is by far the more essentially a Home Amusement. And, as almost everybody has once bought a lot of greenhouse plants but to see them fade before her eyes, we recommend to all to either raise a slip from the root or to start very young plants in a dark room. Thus accustomed to the atmosphere of the house they are to live in, they do sometimes live.

The hardier roses, the calla-lily, all the geraniums (use-



ful dear creatures), the violets and the pinks, grow well in the house. Hanging pots of *calceolarias* and healthy primroses are also possible. Some ladies can raise azaleas at home, but they are difficult. Then there is the kangaroo-vine, and the Jerusalem, and all the other very hardy vines. If a large ivy-vine can be induced to grow over a picture-frame, it is a beautiful friend in midwinter.

Then come the delightful hanging baskets, the Wardian fern-cases, the ornamental stands of pot-plants, and the indoor box of earth for planting rice and grass seed, the wild flowers, which now have become exotics, and all the pretty fancies of throwing seed over a wet sponge. Anything green in winter looks lovely. Nothing more charming than the branches of nasturtion growing in water can be imagined. They grow and flower all winter, and the blue *convolvulus* flourishes well in a hanging basket; so do the common morning-glory and the scarlet bean, both delightful, airy visitors at Christmas.

A wire-work ox-muzzle, filled with moss, makes an admirable basket. It should be painted dark green, and hang over a box of growing flowers, so that it can drip when watered and hurt nothing. Put in the ivy-leaved geranium to drop over its edges; fuchsia, variegated geranium, bright blue lobelia, and the healthful *dracaenas*, *begonias*, and *sedums* also make a very pretty combination. The gardeners give you wooden baskets filled with flowers, and ivy, and ferns, but it is Home Amusement to make these baskets yourself.

Fern-cases are delightful as winter friends. Wardian cases can be made very cheaply, and their perpetual condensation and shower is a very pretty study in physics. A large case, in which large-sized ferns can be accommodated, is best. As regards cultivation, the first thing that demands attention is the drainage of the case; for, if that is defective, neither ferns nor any other plants can be culti-



vated successfully. In order to secure good drainage the case should be fitted with a false bottom, into which the water may drain through perforated zinc or iron, on which the rock-work and little bank for the ferns should be placed. The false bottom, being a little kind of tank or drainer, should be perfectly water-tight, so as to protect the carpet, and should have a tap fixed in one corner of it, by means of which the surplus water should be drained off.

To be able to give free ventilation to the plants every morning is another essential point, as a stagnant atmosphere is as injurious to plants as it is to young children. Over the perforated tray of the case a good layer of broken pottery should be laid, and this should be covered with coconut fiber, on which the rock-work should be laid. The space in which it is intended that the ferns are to grow should then be filled in; and nothing is better than peat, rotten turf, and sharp grit sand as a soil for ferns. In the parts of the case intended for the planting of rather strong-growing ferns a larger proportion of rotten turf should be mixed with the peat than in those intended for less robust varieties. The *adiantum pedatum* (maiden-hair), *capillus veneris*, *pteris tessulata*, *eretica*, *albo lineata*, *polypodium vulgare*, *acrophorus chairophyllus*, *hispidus anemia adiantifolia*, *asplenium striatum*, *bulbiferum*, with *trichomanes* and *lelazinellas*, are all useful, pretty ferns for these cases. If the fern-case be large, it might be advisable to have an arch reaching from end to end.

But any intelligent gardener will tell more in an hour than we could do in a week on the subject of ferns. Many ladies delight in selecting these lovely aristocrats of the forest themselves. They find no difficulty in arranging a little family of native ferns in an improvised Ward's case; and this pursuit, as a reason for a woodland ramble and a subsequent fit of industry on the back piazza, is one which has no end as a Home Amusement.

Plant-stands for halls are very favorite decorations nowadays ; but, of course, the plants must be hardy, as they will be subject to sudden changes of temperature. One lady made a fine effect by cultivating young pine-trees, spruces, and firs in the large stone jars of her hall. Coconut palms or India-rubber plants are the favorite exotics. Hardy ferns group in well for these hall plant-stands. In the bottom of each jar should be placed some broken pottery, for drainage, placed so that the moisture will drain down through the fragments without the soil choking the jar. Over the potsherds a little cocoanut moss should be placed, and then a mixture of leaf-mold, rotten turf and peat, and glass-maker's sand, to keep the whole porous. On the surface of the pots and between them should be put wood moss, as in the case of stands for sitting-rooms. A common seed-pan, filled with *selaginella denticulata* dropped into a small vase, has a fine effect ; long sprays grow out over the sides of the vase and drop down eight to ten inches.

In an ordinary apartment, where the window-sills are not wide enough to hold flower-pots, the plan of wire stands is an admirable one for the window gardener. A piece of oil-cloth under the stand catches all the drippings, and a servant-girl with a wiping-towel can clean up all the *débris*. Soft-wooded plants and those with soft leaves should be arranged as near the window as possible ; and if rearranged and turned against the light often, so much the better. Hard-leaved plants, like ivy and the India-rubber plant, may be put anywhere away from the light. But most plants need light before anything. The *yucca quadricolor*, so much used in the decorative house-jars or vases, becomes beautifully tinted with crimson if it has enough light. Now, if a lady has not room for many rustic *jardinières* and ornamental flower-stands in her room, she can have zinc-pans and pots, neatly enameled and painted, set

on the floor, in which her larger plants may be put out. This is a very good idea for grouping; for she thus produces in her *tout ensemble* some of the wild confusion and grace of Nature.

A climbing rose should go scattering itself over an imperceptible wire trellis. A geranium should steadily blossom beneath. A group of yucca, agave, dracæna, Jerusalem cherry, should form a distinct and effective grouping below. And then beautiful trailing plants should drop from hanging baskets, and from every "coigne of vantage." Ivy grows well in the shade, and may be employed for trailing around sofas, couches, *tête-à-tête* chairs, and picture-frames. Ladies sometimes tie a bottle of water behind a picture-frame, and allow the long shoots of nasturtion to grow out as if from the wall. The effect is startling. Mirrors are often cunningly placed behind a flowering plant which is growing in a hanging basket against the wall, thus doubling the effect.

As the days grow shorter, and the winter threatens to come upon us apace, we are always tempted to bring in from the garden the flowers that we think will last. Just before the fatal frosts, roots of mignonette should be planted in pots and put in a dark closet for a few days, where the plant takes root and accommodates itself to its change of base. It will make a room sweet all winter.

A lady can make all sorts of ornamental flower-pot coverings, and herself arrange pretty leather and paper standard covers for the ugly but useful flower-pot of commerce; or she can buy at most country potteries some very artistic flower-pots—also useful. And to put red, green, and blue glass tubes for hyacinths among these gives her window a very pretty effect. The very study of color in these minor matters adds much to her window garden. It is lucky for all lovers of beauty that beauty is now cheap. Art is putting her slender foot down everywhere; and it is

almost possible, in a remote country village, to get the delicate classic shapes in cheap pottery which the cultivated Greeks imagined three thousand years ago.

For internal decoration by means of cut flowers, it seems almost absurd to attempt to delineate the proper thing to do ; for, if a lady has taste, she will know without being told. But some few hints may not appear impertinent.

For the breakfast-table and dinner-table fresh flowers are almost indispensable. The pretty, cheap, and useful combinations of glass and silver, of china and pottery, which are made to hold flowers, are innumerable. Select a high vase, and fill it every day with fresh grasses, a few daisies, or some graceful ferns combined with white lilies, and you have always a superb center-piece.

For the summer, a large lump of ice covered with flowers, in a silver or glass dish, is delightfully refreshing. It also keeps away the flies. In grand party decorations ice is now freely used, and if some way can be devised to get the refuse water out of the way, it will be always a good thing for a country party or at a grand *fête* at Newport. For great blocks of ice covered with vines and flowers, lighted from behind, have a splendid effect. They cool the air and keep all the flowers fresh. Flowers, when cut, demand coolness ; and the effect of the white crystal column is always beautiful.

Some ladies have a large tub put in the corner of the room, and the pyramid of ice placed in that. Then the tub can be masked by moss, branches of trees, evergreen, or any floral device, and the ice is draped with garlands. At a *fête* at Newport, in 1879, this ice decoration was much admired. At a ball given by the Prince of Wales to the Czarina of Russia in the large conservatory of the Royal Horticultural Society of South Kensington, ten tons of ice were used to build an ornamental rockery. This was

draped with drooping ferns and graceful vines, and was surrounded with crimson baize and lighted from behind.

Nothing is so pretty for the breakfast- or dinner-table as a tall, slender vase which carries the floral decoration high up above the articles of food. Nor is a garden necessary for this species of decoration. Wild flowers, ferns, grasses, and all the beautiful furniture of forest and field, make these vases doubly elegant.

In the rose season—in the sweet days of June—most country gardens overflow with the always regal flower; and this is a table ornament of the highest. The great, broad, low baskets are best for these full, rich queens of color and fragrance. Mass your roses for the middle of the table, and have specimen glasses for some of the more rare varieties. The rose is a cleanly flower, and can be put anywhere near food. But if an unlucky visitor has the rose-cold, then it must be put far away; for the subtle, pungent odor of a rose makes the sufferer sneeze fearfully. There are some families in which roses are thus tabooed.

A basket of roses is the prettiest thing in the world; and the lady going into the country for the summer had better supply herself with a number of these, with handles, from the florist or the basket-maker. If she gets a tin pan also fitted in cunningly, she has the loveliest table ornamentation all ready. Her buffets, her parlor-table, her piano, her brackets can all hold these pleasant things, for which no money need be paid, but which have a value far above money. Never give these baskets a heavy, packed look, but allow plenty of the rich green leaves of the rose to set them off. It seems to us that ladies might create an endless succession of Home Amusements by studying how to vary the effect of their vases and baskets of flowers.

A simple bunch of yellow buttercups in the early spring will make a purple room perfectly beautiful; and dandelions can be massed with great effect. Yellow flowers are



rare, but necessary to produce fine contrasts of color. We all tend too much to the red and white easily-obtained effects. They are poor compared with what we can do.

If Fashion has rather run its worship of the daisy into the ground, Fashion might have done a worse thing. We can scarcely blame Fashion for going back to this impressive flower, which in its simplicity has moved all philosophers, poets, and fortune-tellers to admire and study it.

It seems to us that something more cheerful than our usual Christmas decorations could be invented. We make them too somber. Try mixing in the beautiful bitter-sweet berries, which are so very easily obtained, and which keep all winter. The holly is not so common with us as in England ; still, many a New England swamp produces a host of hips and haws and red berries.

The business of preserving autumn-leaves shows ten failures to one success. Yet, when autumn leaves are well preserved, they are very charming means of winter decoration. They are luminous at evening, and, mixed with ferns and grasses, are perpetual bouquets. But do not varnish them : that gives them a waxy effect, which is detestable. Press them carefully, and iron them under a piece of brown paper. That seems to preserve the color.

Grasses, on the contrary, and a thousand pods and seed-vessels, grains and cat-tails, and certain weeds, dry into beautiful colors and make most wonderful groups for the parlor mantel. The young ladies of our vast continent can not do a better thing than to each year add to these beautiful and most graceful bouquets, which retain, like the fabled Dryads, all the fascination of Nature, even when they have passed into sticks and dry leaves.



## CAGED BIRDS AND AVIARIES.

FROM flowers to birds is a natural transition, and we enter upon that part of Home Amusement which centers around a cage of singing-birds. It is a dreadful thing to snare and to imprison an innocent bird ; therefore we begin with that bird which seems to take most kindly to captivity—the canary.

Travelers tell us that this yellow darling has gray plumage at home ; but as we know them they are generally yellow, white, green, or brown. Climate, food, and intermixture of breeds has, no doubt, to do with this. The canary, which in France is nearly white, at Teneriffe is as brown as a berry. We can not tell why they are always yellow in cages.

The exact date of the introduction of the canary is not known to us. In 1610 the bird was considered a great rarity. According to some authors, the island of Elba was the first European ground on which the canary found a resting-place for its tiny foot. A ship bound for Leghorn, they say, having on board a number of sweet songsters, foundered near this island, on which the birds, set at liberty by the accident, found a refuge ; and the climate was so congenial to their nature that they remained and bred, and would probably have remained there had not their unlucky, fatal gifts of beauty and song betrayed them to the bird-catchers, who hunted them so assiduously that not a

single specimen was left on the island. From Italy these birds soon found their way into France and Germany, from the latter of which countries and the Tyrol we now receive our best supplies. Canary breeding and teaching is conducted in the Tyrol on a large scale, and these trainers have the power always to obtain large prices for their birds. Canary societies exist in England, and small traders, like Poll Sneedlepipes, compete for prizes.

Canary critics recognize two varieties—two grand divisions—in fancy canaries: “gay birds,” or “gay spangles,” and fancy, or “mealy,” birds—the first being plain, like the original stock, and the last variegated. This also includes the *Jonques*, or *Jonquils*, as the yellow birds are technically called. The varieties of these two grand divisions are almost innumerable, nearly every year producing a new one, which, like a prize flower, is in high favor until superseded by a greater beauty. Every year has its fashionable bird, its professional beauty, its Mrs. Langtry, until some Mrs. Cornwallis West or Lady Lonsdale carries off the palm. Like all hobbies, this is a hobby desperately ridden. It is a “Dutch taste for tulips,” and immense prices are given for prize canaries, even by men who can not afford to speculate in such very uncertain stock.

There are certain standard properties which are always considered essential toward gaining a prize. The first property considered in the show bird is the “cap,” which must be of a good gold color. The next is purity of color through the whole bird. Then the wings and tail, which must be black quite home to the quill. The fourth relates to the spangle, which must be distinct. Fifth, size and shape. Besides these properties there are what are called “additional beauties,” not essential to the winning of a prize, but adding to a bird’s chances. These are five in number: pinions, for size and regularity; swallow and throat, for size; fair breast, for regularity; legs and flight,

for blackness. In explanation of this it may be noted that from the beak to the back of the neck is called the "cap," and this should be of a clear orange-color, full and rich in the ground, and with black edges to the feathers. The feathers on the loins, or the *saddle* as it is sometimes called, as well as those of the breast, must be free from black, while the wings must have no admixture of any other color. No bird can fairly compete for a prize which has not black on the stock or neb of the back, flight, or tail feathers, or that has less than eighteen flying feathers in each wing or less than twelve in the tail. Such, lady bird-fanciers, is a prize canary in England!

Holborn is the great canary mart. In St. Andrew's Street every third or fourth house is occupied by a dealer, and those who desire to possess a first-rate singer should visit that street. It is best to go by gaslight, when all the birds are on the twitter.

Now, in America we have the plain yellow bird, with no admixture of black; and yet the same conditions seem to be observed as to his treatment. Sacrifice the beauty of your bird to his song, which is his chief accomplishment. He should have a comfortable mahogany cage, and be allowed to step into it of his own accord. It should be well furnished with seed and water. Place a light in front of the cage, and he will begin to sing. A single hemp-seed or a morsel of chickweed will induce the little prisoner to sing almost immediately. They are very amiable and happy in captivity.

The blackcap, called the "mock-nightingale," is a very charming household pet, if he will live. His power of song is almost equal to that of the nightingale. He is sometimes called "the English mocking-bird," and he imitates any songster whom he may hear—blackbird, thrush, or meadow-lark. They are by no means plentiful birds, and they bring a good price in the market. They are

about the same size as the linnet, and the prevailing colors of the plumage are ashen-gray and olive-green. The old birds feed their young on caterpillars, moths, and other insects. They can be reared, however, on bread and milk. If brought up with a canary or a nightingale, they will acquire a beautiful song composed of their own natural notes and those of these brilliant performers. This bird has been known to live twelve or sixteen years in confinement. It demands some sort of fruit, like cherries, currants, or raspberries in summer ; a bit of apple, pine, or orange in winter. To keep it in perfect health, it must have an iron nail in its cup of water.

But *chacun à son goût*. Every lady has her preferences as to her feathered favorites. Suffice it to say a few words as to the care of these poor little creatures.

Birds are naturally tender things. They are not born to live in cages ; therefore they should be especially cared for. Domestic pets are apt to come to untimely ends, particularly if left to the care of servants, who regard them as a burden and a nuisance, and too often cruelly neglect them. Birds in captivity are very liable to diseases which do not attack them in their wild state ; and in the various casualties which endanger their prison life, their owners should seek to protect them and to cure them. Let it be one of the Home Amusements for the lady to feed her pet canary—to clean its cage, or see that it is done. We have seen a little boy of seven take such care of his pet canary that he shamed all the older people in the house ; and a happier bird never lived.

If you keep but one bird in a cage in very hot weather, his cage should be cleansed once a day. If you minister personally to the comfort of your bird, he will grow very much attached to you. If the perches are not kept clean, the birds become afflicted with the gout and other maladies, resulting in the loss of toes.

Wooden cages, especially of mahogany, are the best, as they are less likely to harbor insects. If of fir or soft wood, the cage should be painted green. The wires of a cage should never be painted, as the wire being non-absorbent, the bird pecks off and eats the paint, which poisons it. Japanned zinc cages are very well. A cage should not be too open. There should always be a snug corner or sheltered place, where the bird can retire and shun observation. It is great cruelty to hang a cage in the sun unprotected. Remember that in their free state birds seek the shady tree. In a shower always bring your birds indoors, for they are apt to take cold if wet in an imprisoned state.

It is a pity that more of our country residents have not the idea of an aviary. It is so very pretty—an abiding-place of beauty, love, song, and happiness. Surely it does not cost so much as a greenhouse.

The model aviary is built of brick or stone, iron and glass, with a stove and pipes fitted to keep it of an even temperature all winter. The floor should be an earthen one, beaten hard, like the floors of some barns. Bricks are too cold. Planks harbor insects, retain bad smells, and form coverts for rats and mice. The roof of the aviary should be semicircular or shelving, with vines and flowing creepers trailing over it, so that there shall be a rustle of green leaves steeped in sunshine, and air laden with sweet perfume to delight the birds within. There should be also creepers and shrubs growing inside for the birds to nest in. Perches and wicker baskets with horse-hair and wool should be left around, and there should be a small marble basin and fountain in the middle, of which the water should be always fresh and changing for the birds to drink. This is, of course, a very magnificent aviary, costing money. But what an addition to Home Amusements to care for the happy family within!



The birds can be of all sorts. At the period of migration—about the last of August—all birds kept in confinement show a great desire to get out, and often beat themselves to death against the walls of their cages. In this time of ardent enterprise the top of the aviary or the cages should be covered with dark cloth, and the poor things shut out from the light.

A much cheaper aviary is built in the form of a large cage on the top of a tree, with open exit and entrances, fitted up with every convenience of bird-furnishing, and visited twice a day by the boys of the family. Here many birds come to lodge and get tamed, as the Indian does by having a house and garden, and often one pair of birds comes back several times. This is a charming sort of aviary, and very much to be commended. What romantic tales of a wayside inn do the robin redbreasts and orioles tell the peeping boy as he goes up the ladder to feed his familiar friends ! It is the prettiest sort of correspondence with *l'inconnu* !

It is a curious thing that the lungs of birds in captivity always suffer from impurity of air, especially when the temperature is at all varied ; this must be one of the points very carefully attended to.

For food—we now are getting to a very creepy stage of our narrative—meal-worms, ugh ! are the *pièce de résistance* ; but canaries, goldfinches, bullfinches, linnets—all, God bless them !—prefer seed ; while chaffinches, buntings, and the whole tit family and larks must have seeds, insects, and fat meat—namely, worms. The nightingales, thrushes, redbreasts, blackcaps, must have worms, crickets, cockroaches, and ant-eggs. The maggots of the blow-fly and all such tidbits, meal-worms, and flesh-maggots must be kept in reserve ; and this kind of housekeeping is apt to shock the delicate sense. Let the boys of the family attend to this part of the birds' diet. Boiled cabbage, green peas,



all sorts of pudding, dry bread, and a little finely minced cooked meat, bread-crumbs mashed up and scalded in milk, milk itself, hemp-seed, a little chickweed, lettuce, and cresses, can be given to birds with advantage.

The bathing of birds must be done with great skill and wisdom. After the operation of a warm bath, with soap, which should be given to nestlings who are troubled with vermin, great care must be taken that they are not chilled, as death will be the result. Wrap them up, like little babies, in flannel.

In teaching them to sing, the voice, the piano, and flute are all good teachers. The patient and music-loving Germans teach all birds to sing. It should be begun in the morning early, when the bird is hungry; and his lesson should not last more than an hour.

Early and regular attendance, gentleness and kindness, are the *rationale* of bird-tending, as of nearly everything else!

Those half-captives, the pigeons, should be around every country house. How beautiful they are in Venice! the pigeons of St. Mark, which have swooped about that storied piazza for so many years, because regularly fed there. All boys should learn to cultivate them; to have the lovely shifting luster of their necks lighting up the ground and making gay the twilight. How proud and pompous are the pouters! how gentle the ringdoves! and how pretty the whole family! Peacocks are very stately visitors, and, except for their horrid shrieks, are especially to be commended. The old ruffled turkey-gobbler has his charms; and the pages of Hawthorne teach us how very amusing a group of hens and chickens may become. We advise every family to have as many birds as they can possibly feed; for every bird is a study, from the blink-eyed owl which hides in the fir-tree, to the poor old goose that quacks and hobbles toward the pond. Indeed, the æsthetics are all pretending that

the goose is the most beautiful of them all!—a perfect love, a type, is a goose, since Walter Crane and Kate Greenaway came in. But we still prefer the stately swan, of which splendid specimens are now beginning to add their attractions to our inland lakes. The goose is all very well in her way, but the swan is better.

## PICNICS.

PERHAPS it is not well to class among Home Amusements a series of entertainments which imply, at first sight, the getting away from home. But, as the basket of luncheon has to be packed at home, and the best part of a picnic is the getting home again, we must be permitted a divergence.

It is curious to see how emphatically fond of picnics the Americans are. A universal national hunger seems to seize the tired cit as the first warm day of May beams upon us. They "babble of green fields." Best of all charities those which send the poor children off, on boats and trains, for a whiff of pure air! It is the blessed privilege of the rich to thin out the crowded tenement, and to send the overplus of an irrepressible civilization back to Nature for a moment.

But, for a Home Amusement in the country, what can compare with the joy of getting ready for a picnic? The baskets for the provisions (and be sure, Mary, not to forget the salt or the sugar), the coffee-pot that will stand being poked down into the wood-coals, the fine old swinging iron kettle, the bread, the knives, and the pail of ice. Ah!

Then, as to carriages. Not the luxurious cushioned barouche, but the shabbiest old rattletraps about the place are the proper ones. A good old hay-wagon is the very best—if it have hay in it. It may do very well at Newport for the luxurious to drive out to one of Mr. Bennett's pic-

nies in a four-in-hand or a drag, or a Victoria or a barouche ; but in the country take the buckboard, the old Rockaway wagon, which holds nine—the more the merrier—the farm-wagon, and the market-cart. Filled with youth, beauty, and jollity, these become the chariots of Apollo.

It is not always easy to get mamma to a picnic ; but it is good for her, and for all the others, if she will go. She is apt to be anxious about rain, and is afraid of farmer Bell's bull ; and she should be allowed to go in an easy carriage. She also fears to take cold, and is mightily frightened at those crazy boats on the lake. But it is better for all parties if these fears are assuaged and she really goes. The change does her good, and she acts as a temporary restraint on the too volatile spirits of the party.

Another power hard to coerce is Statira, who is the head of the commissary department. Statira, cook and factotum, was brought up on the wrong side of a mullein-patch herself, and she is not in love with the country. She remembers the woods as a place where she went to look, in her youth, for recalcitrant cows ; and in winter, how cold and bleak the woods were ! Her present warm and cultivated kitchen, with stationary wash-tubs, is to her a far more agreeable spot. She hesitates, as the young people ask for her delicate apple-pies and her delicious cakes, “to cram into baskets,” to “eat out in the pasture,” as she sniffingly avers.

However, although Statira is a greater tyrant than Nero, the young people prevail, and the picnic gets started somehow. What a jolly hour is passed in driving through the still valley to the brow of yonder hill, which commands a view of the whole country ! Then Susan, the thoughtful one, dreads lest the coffee-pot has been forgotten. Hurried search ! The coffee-pot is found under a back seat. Happiness restored, the songs go on, and the murmuring pines and the hemlocks take up the wondrous tale.

Then the party arrive at the lake. The girls take off their hats. The winds play with the "tangles in Nerea's hair." The picnic is a nice opportunity for a pretty foot, a fine figure, and a splendid head of hair—so it is said. Then come rambles into the forest.

That is a pretty story of a nymph who appeared on the edge of a forest, but who disappeared as she was followed, until, at last, as her lover pursued her farther into the forest, he threw his arms about a white hawthorn-tree. It is the world's earliest romance that the first courtship took place at a picnic. Roses and briars twine around lovers for ever, and the lotus and the buttercup tell the same story.

Picnics are healthy ; but should be appropriately dressed. Balmoral boots, broad hats, and flannel dresses, warm, plain, and serviceable. A white Marseilles which will wash—percales and cambrics and gingham will do ; but no finery should be allowed. At Newport one may try the Watteau combination of brocade and satin, with fine old house, grounds, and trellised arcades. But at a country picnic Watteau dresses are out of place. Our climate is too fitful for safe picnicking, as we dread rain. In England they do not care, but lunch at Ascot, with the rain pouring into the champagne. But here we need to go prepared with aquiscutums and umbrellas, and a neighboring barn is well in the near distance.

It is a common want, this need of the confessional of Nature. We leave our morbid fancies, our discontents, in the bosom of our dear common mother, and we come back as cheerful as is the dappled deer. We like to go back to that idyllic spot where the race started.

In the spring certain natures get frisky, like the colts. One pasture will not hold them. We get tired of white man's work. It was a true reading of the human heart which made the Greeks place Apollo with the shepherds of

Admetus, and Jove stooping to the people of the hill-sides. "The populous all-loving solitude" of Nature draws us with a potent hand. Our houses are a false shell. Titania's subjects will rebel. That rural solitude, which has no conventionality; that desert rock, against which the noisy wave of human folly breaks itself; the dense forest, where is sung the mighty hymn of the pines; the brow of the hill which the sun kisses last; the lone seashore; the distant heath; that cloud-shadow on the mountain—these are all necessary to us once a year. We must go once to "*La roche qui pleure*." We must go where the forest-growths expand in all their strength and splendor. We must find the shyest wild flower, the most untamable vine. It is in the fable of Daphne that we read the deep significance, the poetry, the true meaning of our love of the picnic.

Who of us—comfortable and well housed—but has in some moment of nomadic instinct envied the tramp and the gypsy their life of chapleted ease, as they lie on the greensward, hugging dear mother Nature to their very bosoms? Who has not some wild, untamed blood in his veins—some fellowship for the Indian—some desire for the flitting caress of the passing breeze, or the somber greeting of the mountain shadow?

But no more poetry, if you please. We are getting hungry. Where are those baskets? Ah! the cold roast beef, the wing of a chicken, and the salt, not forgotten!

Those hard-boiled eggs—how good they are! So glad that chicken-raising has been one of our Home Amusements! Just a high picket-fence, a few good hens, some boxes, and a little attention, and what eggs these are! Mamma will not, however, eat them; she says they are unwholesome. But she takes a piece of the breast of a noble pullet, and a cup of coffee in a tin mug, made by Sam, best of cooks, amateur—college-bred cook—who has boiled it under the trees! and laid the grounds with a dash of cold



water. Sam puts his own clearness and strength into the coffee.

And now for an hour's reverie by the side of the lake ; and then a rough-and-tumble drive home ! How tired, ragged, jagged, disheveled, and happy we are as we get home !

Statira has built a splendid wood-fire for us, and has a supper of broiled chicken, cold ham, preserves and cream, baked potatoes, and toast, and hot biscuits which might tempt the virtue of an anchorite. We have no such proud resistance. We have brought an appetite from the place where they make them ; and we can eat hot biscuits and still wrap the drapery of our couch about us and lie down to pleasant dreams.

A picnic is, therefore, a Home Amusement. It has home at both ends ; else it would not be a picnic.

## PLAYING WITH FIRE. CERAMICS.

Now let us ascend from these trivialities to the consideration of the great subject which has been more talked of and dabbled in for the last seven years than any accomplishment ever was, before or since. The splendid display of Ceramic Art at our great Exposition of 1876 no doubt had its share in creating that intense interest in the subject which has been felt everywhere.

How it came into the category of Home Amusements we hardly know, unless the art schools stimulated the pursuit. But now we do know that nearly every lady paints a plate, from grandma down to the smallest child. Especially has it become the pastime of middle-aged ladies, who have got through with the work of life, and have much leisure on their hands. It is one of the many accomplishments which has taken the place of the German wool worsted abomination, the canvas roses, and counted out violets.

"Home would be happier were it not for the smell of turpentine," said a lively girl as she found her grandmother, mother, and sister all hard at the plaques. It is true, this pungent liquid is necessary, and the china after being painted has to be baked—two very unpleasant accompaniments. But let us see how it is done.

One needs, first, a porcelain palette ; a glass slab about eight inches square ; several small and medium-sized camel's-hair brushes ; several blenders, large and small ; a quart-

bottle of spirits of turpentine ; a quart-bottle of alcohol ; a small bottle of oil of turpentine ; one of oil of lavender ; one of copaiba ; a steel palette-knife, also one of horn or ivory ; a rest for the hand while painting, made of a strip of wood about an inch and a half wide and twelve inches long, supported at each end by a foot an inch and a half in height. A flat ruler or thin strip of wood may be used for plates, or any flat piece having a raised edge, and may be found more convenient than the cumbrous rests. A fine needle, set in a handle, for removing particles of dust which may settle in the painting, and a small glass muller, are required.

The china used for decoration must be of the finest quality, and free from spots. The hard porcelain of French manufacture is the best for this purpose. The mineral paints bought in tubes (those of Lacroix, of Paris, being the best) are the colors which stand fire. Brushes, as for water-color painting, are used. Small camel's-hair brushes with square ends may be had, which will do for blending when necessary in fine work.

In tinted surfaces and borders large blenders are necessary. The brushes used by gilders, and called "trade-gilders' brushes," make good blenders ; No. 9 is a very useful size. In placing the color on these surfaces, a broad, flat camel's-hair brush, rather more than an inch in width, should be used. In narrow bands and lines, brushes of suitable size with very long hair and square ends are employed.

The colors most in use are : dark carmine, flesh-red, capucine-red, dark red, brown, iron-violet. In *purples*—deep purple, dark golden violet. *Blues*—sky-blue, dark ultramarine, deep blue. *Greens*—grass-green, brown green, apple-green. *Yellows*—mixing yellow, ivory-yellow, jonquil-yellow, orange-yellow. *Browns*—dark brown, yellow brown. *Black*—ivory-black. Permanent white ; pearl-gray ; black gray.

Now, in commencing to paint a design on china, the first thing to be done is to sketch the outline. The best way to do this is to prepare the china by rubbing the surface with spirits of turpentine, and, after having left it a few minutes to dry, draw the design upon it very lightly with a hard lead-pencil. Alcohol may be used for the same purpose, and has the advantage that it is not so liable to catch the dust. The surface, however, does not receive the marks of the lead-pencil so well as when it is prepared with turpentine.

Lithographic crayon may be used, and without any preparation ; but the outline is not so delicate as that drawn with the lead-pencil.

If the subject is a difficult one, as, for instance, a design containing several figures, time may be saved, and liability to error avoided, by tracing the design, which insures the correct relative position of the figures, and tends to produce the object desired—a correct copy of the original. It is better, however, to sketch simpler subjects direct on the china. It is commonly supposed that a tracing is of great assistance to any one unskilled in drawing ; but if one is unable to draw a correct outline, it is hardly possible that the painting will be good. It is so very easy to lose the outline in working that, after all, a tracing is but a slight indication, which has for its principal use the placing of the design in exactly the right position on the plate or other object to be decorated.

There are various ways of tracing, the simplest and best of which is the following : Lay a piece of transparent paper over the design to be copied, and trace the outlines very carefully with a hard lead-pencil. Then turn the tracing-paper over on any white surface, and go over all the lines on the reverse side with a soft pencil. You can now lay the tracing right side up on the china, which has been previously prepared for the lead-pencil with turpentine,

and having placed it in exactly the right position, secure it by means of bits of modeling-wax or gummed paper at the corners, and pass over the lines with a hard point, or rub the entire surface with a rounded instrument; the handle of the palette-knife may be used for this purpose. This will transfer the pencil drawing to the surface of the china.

The more delicate the outline the better, provided it is more plainly visible, as a heavy, dark, or colored outline sullies the colors used upon it, and causes much annoyance in working. Although it may disappear in the firing, it is better to avoid it. Faulty lines in the tracing may be rectified by the use of a sharpened stick of soft wood moistened with turpentine.

If tube-colors are used, and found difficult to lay, a drop of oil of turpentine may be added to the turpentine. Care should be taken, however, to avoid too much oil, as it renders the colors liable to blister in the fire. The use of clove-oil as a medium is advised by some. The color can, perhaps, be more easily laid with it than with spirits of turpentine. It does not dry so quickly, however, and, unless recourse is had to the process of drying the work with the aid of an alcohol lamp, its use involves tedious waiting. It is better to use turpentine and finish the work at one sitting. The drying of colors is affected by the state of the atmosphere. If, during the progress of the painting, it is found to be difficult to work over the colors first laid—which are indeed very liable to come up—the piece of china may be placed in a moderately warm oven to dry before proceeding. On being taken out of the oven, the colors will be found to have lost their gloss, if perfectly dry, and, perhaps, will have changed their hue. No alarm need be felt at this, as they will return to their former brilliancy when fired. But here we come to a great trouble.

The chance of a piece “firing” well is one of the great trials of the china painter, and is beyond her control; but

this is always counted in. It is best to send the piece to a pottery to be burned. A cup containing turpentine should stand near the working table to wash the brushes; and after using a color containing iron, the brush should be carefully washed before it is charged with one which does not contain iron, or if white is to be used. The brushes ought not to be too small, and the colors should, as far as possible, be laid in broad washes, and decided touches placed lightly and quickly, and not overworked. The use of the blender may be resorted to if necessary, especially in laying the first washes; although it is better to avoid using it afterward, if possible.

The same rules may be applied to china painting as to water-colors, to which it bears a strong resemblance. The greatest art consists in placing each touch where it should go, and leaving it; not spoiling it by uncertainty, or degrading the tint by overwork. In fine work, lining and stippling are necessary in finishing, but should not be carried to excess or made too apparent. These latter processes are, perhaps, more indispensable in preparing work for a single firing, as it is very difficult to lay repeated washes over one another; the under-tint comes up so readily, especially when it is not thoroughly dry. The same place must never be passed over by the brush twice in immediate succession, as the under-tint will certainly come up, and the blot caused in the painting will be difficult to rectify. It is of no use to attempt it while it is wet. Work on some other part, and then go over it, or first dry it in the oven.

Some of the tube-colors may require to be rubbed down after being taken from the tubes. This will be especially necessary in the case of the carmines and the whites. A horn or ivory palette-knife should be used with these colors, as well as with the blues, and all colors containing no iron. Mixtures of colors on the palette may be rubbed down occasionally, or mixed with the brush before using, to prevent



them from separating themselves into their component parts.

Too much turpentine should not be taken into the brush when it is to be charged with color. Dip it into the turpentine, and remove the surplus moisture by drawing the brush over the edge of the vessel containing it before taking up the color from the palette. The tint may be tried first on the edge of the plate. Surplus color or moisture may be removed by touching the brush upon a muslin rag, which should always be at hand for the purpose of wiping the brushes.

After using, the brushes should be washed in alcohol. The bottle containing it should be kept tightly corked, as it evaporates very quickly when exposed to the air. Care must be taken that no drops of the alcohol drop upon the painting, as it will immediately remove the colors from the surface. When the large brushes are cleaned after being washed in the alcohol, the hairs should be spread apart, and the fingers passed lightly over them until they are dry; otherwise the hairs may stick together in drying, and the brush be rendered unfit for use. Washing in alcohol will prevent the turpentine used in painting from injuring the brushes, as it would if allowed to remain in them. The tube-colors should be preserved from heat as far as possible.

We have taken these rules, partly from personal experience, partly from the best manuals, and the china painter can *begin* on them. But a few lessons from a master are very valuable, and the best of all teachers—patience—will help the young and inexperienced better than any written directions.

We would like to say a few words more on the all-important subject of firing. “The Amateur’s Miniature Kiln,” now sold by the Decorative Art Society, and by the patentee, Miss N. M. Ford, Port Richmond, New York, enables the amateur to fire small articles of decorated china

with perfect success. If near a large city, it is better to send the plaques to a large establishment where they are in the habit of baking them.

The amateur has to make up her mind to a great many failures at first, but after the accomplishment is somewhat conquered, it is an inexpensive and delightful addition to Home Amusements.

No one should, however, attempt to paint upon china who does not know first how to draw. The hand should be skillful on paper before it touches the flat brush; for the outlines, while seemingly coarse, must be very expressive, and very certain.

## XVII.

### ARCHERY.

FASHION has again brought round as one of the Home Amusements this pretty and romantic pastime, which has filled the early ballads with many a picturesque figure. Now on many a lawn may be seen the target and the group in Lincoln green. Indeed, it looks as if Archery were to prove a very formidable rival to Lawn Tennis.

The requirements of Archery are these : First, a bow ; secondly, arrows ; thirdly, a quiver, pouch, and belt ; fourthly, a grease-pot, an arm-guard or brace, a shooting glove, a target, and a scoring card.

The bow is the most important article in archery, and also the most expensive. It is usually from five to six feet in length, made of a single piece of yew, or of lance-wood and hickory glued together back to back. The former is best for gentlemen, the latter for ladies, as it is better adapted for the short, sharp pull of the feminine arm. The wood is gradually tapered, and at each end is a tip of horn, the one from the upper end being longer than the other or lower one. The strength of bows is marked in pounds, varying from twenty-five to thirty pounds. Ladies' bows are from twenty-five to forty pounds in strength, and those of gentlemen from fifty to eighty pounds. One side of the bow is flat, called its "back" ; the other is rounded, called the "belly." Nearly in the middle, where the hand should take hold, it is lapped round with velvet, and that part is

called the "handle." In each of the tips of horns is a notch for the string, called the "nock."

Bow-strings are made of hemp or flax—the former being the better material ; for though at first they stretch more, yet they wear longer and stand a harder pull, as well as being more elastic in the shooting. In applying a fresh string to a bow, be careful in opening it not to break the composition that is on it. Cut the tie, take hold of the eye, which will be found ready worked at one end, let the other part hang down, and pass the eye over the upper end of the bow. If for a lady, it may be held from two to two and a half inches below the nock ; if for a gentleman, half an inch lower, varying it according to the length and strength of the bow. Then run your hand along the side of the bow and string to the bottom nock. Turn it round that, and fix it by the noose, called the "timber noose," taking care not to untwist the string in making it. This noose is simply a turn-back and twist without a knot. When strung, a lady's bow will have the string about five inches from the belly, and a gentleman's about half an inch more. The part opposite the handle is bound round with waxed silk, in order to prevent its being frayed by the arrow. As soon as a string becomes too soft and the fibers too straight, rub it with beeswax, and give it a few turns in the proper direction, so as to shorten it, and twist its strands a little tighter. A spare string should always be provided by the shooter.

The arrows are differently shaped by various makers, some being of uniform thickness throughout, while others are protuberant in the middle ; some, again, are larger at the point than at the feather-end. They are generally made of white deal, with points of iron or brass riveted on ; but generally having a piece of heavy wood spliced on to the deal between it and the point, by which their flight is improved. At the other end a piece of horn is inserted in

which is a notch for the string. They are armed with three feathers, glued on, one of which is of a different color from the others, and is intended to mark the proper position of the arrow when placed on the string, this one always pointing from the bow. These feathers properly applied give a rotary motion to the arrow which causes its flight to be straight. They are generally from the wing of the turkey or the goose. The length and weight of the arrows vary, the latter (in England) being marked in sterling silver coin, and stamped on the arrow in plain figures. It is usual to paint a crest or a monogram or distinguishing rings on the arrow just below the feathers, by which they may be known in shooting at the target.

The quiver is merely a tin case painted green, intended for the security of the arrows when not in use. The pouch and belt are worn round the waist, the latter containing those arrows which are actually being shot. A pot to hold grease for touching the glove and string, and a tassel to wipe the arrows, are hung at the belt. The grease is composed of beef-suet and wax melted together. The arm is protected from the blow of the string by the brace, a broad guard of strong leather buckled on by two straps. A shooting glove, also of thin tubes of leather, is attached to the wrist by three flat pieces ending in a circular strap buckled round it. This glove prevents that soreness of the fingers which soon comes on after using the bow without it.

The target consists of a circular mat of straw, covered with canvas painted in a series of circles. It is usually from three feet six inches to four feet in diameter. The middle is about six or eight inches in diameter, gilt, and called the "gold"; the next is called the "red," after which comes the "inner white," then the "black," and finally the "outer white." These targets are mounted on triangular stands at distances apart of from fifty to a hundred yards—sixty being the usual shooting distance.

A scoring card is provided with columns for each color, which are marked with a pin. The usual score for a gold hit or the bull's-eye is 9 ; the red, 7 ; inner white, 6 ; black, 3 ; and outer white, 1.

To bend the bow properly the bow should be taken by the handle in the right hand. Place one end on the ground, resting in the hollow of the right foot, keeping the flat side of the bow, called the back, toward your person. The left foot should be advanced a little, and the right placed so that the bow can not slip sideways. Place the heel of the left hand upon the upper limb of the bow, below the eye of the string. Now, while the fingers and thumb of the left hand slide this eye toward the notch in the horn, and the heel pushes the limb away from the body, the right hand pulls the handle toward the person, and thus resists the action of the left, by which the bow is bent ; and at the same time the string is slipped into the nock, as the notch is termed. Take care to keep the three outer fingers free from the string, for if the bow should slip from the hand, and the string catch them, they will be severely pinched. If shooting in frosty weather, warm the bow before the fire, or by friction with a woollen cloth. If the bow has been lying by for a long time, it should be well rubbed with boiled linseed-oil before using it.

To unstring the bow, hold it as in stringing, then press down the upper limb exactly as before, and as if you wished to place the eye of the string in a higher notch. This will loosen the string and liberate the eye, when it must be lifted out of the nock by the forefinger, and suffered to slip down the limb.

Before using the bow, hold it in a perpendicular direction with the string toward you, and see if the line of the string cuts the middle of the bow. If not, shift the eye and noose of the string to either side, so as to make the two lines coincide. This precaution prevents a very common



cause of defective shooting, which is the result of an uneven string throwing the arrow on one side. After using it, unstring it; and at a large shooting party, unloose your bow after every round. Some bows get bent into very unmanageable shapes.

The general management of the bow should be on the principle that damp injures it, and that any loose floating ends interfere with its shooting. It should, therefore, be kept well varnished, and in a waterproof case, and it should be carefully dried after shooting in damp weather. If there are any ends hanging from the string, cut them off close, and see that the whipping in the middle of the string is close and well fitting. The case should be hung up against a dry internal wall, not too near the fire. In selecting your bow, be careful that it is not too strong for your power, and that you can draw the arrow to its head without any trembling of the hand. If this can not be done after a little practice, the bow should be changed for a weaker one. For no arrow will go true if it is discharged by a trembling hand.

If an arrow has been shot into the target or the ground, be particularly careful to withdraw it by laying hold close to its head, and by twisting it round as it is withdrawn in the direction of its axis. Without this precaution it may be easily bent or broken.

In shooting at the target, the first thing is to nock the arrow; that is, to place it properly on the string. In order to effect this, take the bow in the left hand, with the string toward you, the upper limb being toward the right. Hold it horizontally while you take the arrow by the middle, pass it on the under side of the string and the upper side of the bow, till the head reaches two or three inches past the left hand. Hold it there with the forefinger or thumb while you remove the right hand down to the nock. Turn the arrow till the cock-feather comes uppermost, then pass it

down the bow, and fix it on the nocking part of the string. In doing this, all contact with the feathers should be avoided, unless they are rubbed out of place, when they may be smoothed down by passing them through the hand.

The body should be at right angles with the target, but the face must be turned over the left shoulder, so as to be opposed to it. The feet are to be flat on the ground, with the heels a little apart, the left foot turned toward the mark. The head and chest inclined a little forward, so as to present a full bust, but not bent at all below the waist.

Draw the arrow to the full length of the arm till the hand touches the shoulder, then take aim. The loosing should be quick, and the string must leave the fingers smartly and steadily. The bow-hand must be as firm as a vice—no trembling allowed.

The rules of an Archery Club are usually these :

That a "Lady Paramount" be annually elected.

That there be a President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

That all members intending to shoot shall appear in the uniform of the club. That a fine shall be imposed for non-attendance.

That the Secretary shall send out cards at least a month before each day of meeting, acquainting the members with place and hour of meeting.

That there shall be four prizes for each meeting—two for each sex ; the first for numbers, the second for hits ; and that no person shall be allowed to have both on the same day. A certain sum of money is voted to the Lady Paramount for prizes for each meeting.

That in case of a tie for hits, numbers shall decide ; and in case of a tie for numbers, hits shall decide.

That the decision of the Lady Paramount shall be final.

That there shall be a challenge prize of the value of — dollars, and that a commemorative ornament be presented to winners of the challenge prize.

That the distance for shooting be sixty or one hundred yards, and that five-foot targets be used.

The dress of the club to be decided by the Lady Paramount.

The expenses of archery are not great—about the same as lawn tennis—although a great many arrows are lost in the course of the season. Bows and other paraphernalia last a long time. Sides are chosen as at lawn tennis, and the game grows on one. The lady archers are apt to feel a little lame after the first two or three essays, but they should practice a short time every morning, and always in a loose waist or jacket. It will be found a very healthy and strengthening pastime.

We must not judge of the merits of ancient bowmen from the practice of archery in the present day. There are no such distances now assigned for the marks as we find mentioned in old histories or poetic legends, nor such precision, even at short lengths, in the direction of the arrow.

“The stranger he made no mickle ado,  
But he bent a right good bow,  
And the fattest of all the herd he slew,  
Forty good yards him fro;  
*‘Well shot, well shot,’ quoth Robin Hood.*”

Few, if any, modern archers in long shooting reach four hundred yards, or in shooting at a mark exceed eighty or a hundred. But archery has been since the invention of gun-powder only followed for pastime. It is decidedly the most graceful game which can be practiced, and the legends of Sherwood Forest, of Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Little John, Friar Tuck, and the Abbot carry us into the fragrant heart of the forest, and bring back memories which are agreeable to all people who have in them a drop of Saxon blood.

## XVIII.

### AMUSEMENTS FOR THE MIDDLE-AGED AND THE AGED.

WE can not but notice, as people go on in life—when, as Lord Mansfield said, “The absence of pain is pleasure, just as in youth the absence of pleasure is pain”—that the quiet corner by the fire, or the seat at the library-table with the shaded lamp, and a quiet game or two when reading has fatigued the eyes, becomes almost necessary.

Of all the means of cheating a succession of dull evenings of their tedium, perhaps that little invention called a “Solitaire” board—which is simply a board pierced with thirty-seven holes, which are nearly filled with thirty-six pegs—has proved itself the most eminently successful. It was invented, it is said, by a French Jesuit, in Canada, to help him through the long Canadian winter evenings, and it has proved to be a boon to mankind.

One peg takes another when it can leap over into an empty hole. To get all off but one peg is nearly impossible, but it can be done.

Then comes “Merelles,” or “Nine Men’s Morris,” which can be played on a board, or on the ground, but which finds itself reduced even to a parlor game. This, however, takes two players.

“American Bagatelle,” which can be played alone, or with an antagonist; Chinese puzzles, which are infinitely amusing; and all the great family of the sphinx known as

puzzles—are of infinite service to the retired, quiet, lonely people for whom the active business of life is at an end. The guessing of arithmetical puzzles, the solution of enigmas, and the solution of a paradox—these amuse many an evening.

We may give one of these old things as an example. It is called “The Blind Abbot and his Monks,” and is played with counters. Arrange eight external cells of a square so that there may always be nine in each row, though the whole number may vary from eighteen to thirty-six.

A convent in which there were nine cells was occupied by a blind abbot and twenty-four monks, the abbot lodging in the center cell, and the monks in the side cells, three in each, giving a row of nine persons on each side of the building. The abbot, suspecting the fidelity of his brethren, often went out at night and counted them, and when he found nine in each row the old man counted his beads, said an Ave ! and went to bed contented. The monks, taking advantage of his failing sight, contrived to deceive him, so that four could go out nightly, yet leave nine in a row. How did they do it ?

The next night, emboldened by success, the monks returned with four visitors and then arranged them nine in a row. The next night they brought in four more belated brethren, and again arranged them nine in a row ; and again four more. Finally, when the twelve clandestine brothers had departed, and six monks with them, the remainder deceived the abbot again by presenting a row of nine. Try it with the counters, and see how they so abused the privileges of a conventual seclusion.

Then try quibbles—“How can I get wine out of a bottle if I have no corkscrew, and must not break the glass or make any hole in it or the cork ?”

The telling of a good story well should be encouraged. The *raconteur* can be the most delightful of all house-

hold blessings. A mother who can tell a story well by the nursery fire is a potent force ; and the one who will light up the winter evening by telling stories of adventures—the simplest every-day ones in the street—the little journey, even the round of shopping, becomes very much of a treasure. Some ladies commit to memory the stories of Hans Christian Andersen; Grimm, the fairy-story maker; Charles Kingsley's short stories, Ouida's "A Dog of Flanders," or the poems of Dr. Holmes, or some other benefactor of mankind, and tell these stories and poems in a sort of unpremeditated way by the library-table. This is a charming accomplishment. Some people have the gift of improvising, and will tell a very good bit of ghost story in a very gruesome manner for the entertainment of those who enjoy the night side of nature.

But this talent should never be abused. The man who in cold blood fires off a long poetical quotation at a dinner, or makes a speech in defiance of the goose-flesh which is creeping down his neighbors' backs, is a traitor to honor and religion, and he deserves the death of a Nihilist. It is only when these extempore talents can be used without alarming people that they are useful or endurable.

We might make our Christmas holidays a little more gay in this country. We might read and study up all the old English and the German customs, beyond the mistle-toe, the tree, and the rather faded legend of Santa Claus. There are worlds of legendary lore which would help us to make this time-honored festival even more lively and gay and amusing than it is. We have not yet reached the English jollity at Christmas.

The supper-table has, as an American home festival, rather fallen into desuetude. We sup out, but rarely have that informal and delightful meal which once wound up every evening devoted to Home Amusement. Mrs. Elizabeth Montague, in her delightful letters, talks about the



“whisk and the quadrille parties with a light supper” which amused the ladies of her day. We still have the “whisk,” but what has become of lansquenet, quadrille, basset, and piquet, those pretty and courtly games?

Playing-cards made their way through Arabia from India to Europe, where they first arrived about the year 1370. They carried with them the two arts, engraving and painting. They were the *avants coureurs* of engraving on wood and metal, and of printing.

Cards early began to be the luxuries of kings and queens, the necessity of the gambler, and the consolation of those who innocently like games. Piquet, a courtly game, was invented by Étienne Vignoles, called *La Hire*, one of the most active soldiers of the reign of Charles VII. This brave soldier was an accomplished chevalier, deeply imbued with a reverence for the manners and customs of chivalry. Cards continued from this time to follow the whim of the court and to assume the character of the period through the regency of Marie de Medicis, in the time of Anne of Austria and of Louis XIV. The Germans are the first people who essayed to make a pack of cards assume the form of a scholastic treatise. The king, queen, knight, and *knave* tell of English manners, customs, and nomenclature.

## THE PARLOR.

THAT is a poorly-furnished parlor, think some people, which has not a chess-table in one corner, a whist-table in the middle, and a little solitaire-table at the other end near the fire, for grandma. People who are fond of games stock their table drawers with cribbage boards and backgammon, cards of every variety, b  zique counters and packs, and the red and white champions of the hard-fought battlefield of chess.

Mrs. Frances Anne Kemble, one of the most gifted of women—whose recollections would, one would think, be the most attractive book which one could read—is devoted to card solitaire. Every evening she describes herself as spending an hour or two over these combinations. This is not to be confused with the game of peg solitaire.

Whist! Who shall pretend to describe its attractions? What a relief it is to the tired man of business who has been fighting the world all day, to the woman who has no longer any part in the gay and glittering pageant of society! what pleasure in its regulated, shifting fortunes! We all have seen that holding the cards—even the highest ones—does not always win the game. We have noticed that with a poor hand somebody wins fame, success, happiness. We feel the injustice of that long suit which has baffled our best endeavors. Whist is a parody on life; we play our own experience over again in its faithless kings

and queens. The knave is apt to trip us up on the green cloth as on the street. We are simply playing the real over in shadow.

The great passion for gambling is no doubt behind even the game of Boston, played for beans. We all like to accumulate, to believe that we are Fortune's favorite. What matter if it be only a few more beans than one's neighbor? The principle remains the same.

So long as cards do not lead to gambling, they are innocent enough. Indeed, they are a priceless boon to eyes which can no longer see to read; to those who must get rid of time; to those who are ill, weary, or unfortunate. We always wonder at seeing the young take to them; it seems as if they could do so much better; but the sight of a parlor, warm, well lighted, with its games going on in every corner, is not a disagreeable one. Especially should the young ladies of the family look to this arrangement, and see that everything is comfortable for papa's game of whist, *béziq*ue, or cribbage. They do not know how great a necessity it may be to him—what a relief, what a consolation!

As for Chess, the devotee of this heavy, remorseless game has no further need of our help or sympathy. To any one who likes to puzzle his brain over the fantastic skips of the Knight or the prodigious descent of the Castle, we can offer no suggestions except that he may be left undisturbed.

As for Music, one can hardly say anything which has not been said about its transcendent powers in assisting at every Home Amusement. The family circle which has learned three or four instruments, the brothers who can sing part songs, are to be envied. They can never suffer from a dull evening. Even the musical absurdities of Kindergarten choruses are to be commended, and the German mimiéry of all the instruments. What a blessing to a

family is the man who can sing comic songs, and who also does not sing them too often !

It is well, where it can be done easily, to allow young boys to sing in church choirs ; to train their voices, and be with musical people ; to learn choruses, chants, etc. In that way Arthur Sullivan began, that benefactor of his species, the author of "Pinafore." What has *not* "Pinafore" done to help along the musical education of our young people ? How it has been sung in country towns ! How church choirs have taken it up ! How popular, innocent, sweet it is !

Now, in our musical home training we may not make an Arthur Sullivan, but we shall certainly add to the sum of innocent enjoyment ; and it is a delightful fact that if there are six or seven children in a family, one of them is apt to have a good voice, one a talent for the piano, and generally all can be taught to play and sing a little. Sometimes there are rarely gifted, great musical organizations in all the sons and daughters, which is a supreme blessing. For there is not only Home Amusement in it, but a certainty of making a good living, if fortune frowns and makes work necessary.

The only deep shadow to the musical picture is the necessity of practicing, which is *not* a Home Amusement ; it is a home torture. If only a person could learn to play or sing without those dreadful first noises and those hideous shrieks ! But, since these are not to be avoided, some one in the family must have the tact to arrange them well, and to have the hours of the various students so placed that there need not be a perpetual tinkle-tinkle, or something worse.

The season of early spring and summer ! Oh ! what sounds come through the first open casement ! How dreadful is that *appoggiatura* ! how fearful that badly-played waltz ! Is it possible that yon violinist will ever be Mau-

rice Dengrémont? And yet it is by these hard chromatic steps that all have mounted the heavenly stairs of melody.

No young lady should sing in public—that is, before a party of friends—until she can sing *well*. In these days, when amateur cultivation has reached a high point, let everybody say to herself, “Am I sufficiently advanced to give pleasure by my singing?” and let her modestly abstain from singing if she finds that, after hearing her once, her friends do not press her to sing again. There is, perhaps, nothing so foolish as for a woman to persist in singing in her own parlor when she is not a thoroughly good vocalist. No one can get away from her there. They must suffer. Still, if birds *can* sing, they should sing. Nothing is more disagreeable than to have to urge a person to sing. The possessor of a voice is always a very rare and much to be envied person, and a certain amiability in singing becomes such a person very much.

All young ladies who have been taught the piano should have some pieces learned, and be able to play for the amusement of the home circle. Especially should they be able to play for dancing. A few waltzes are very convenient. They often help off a dull evening wonderfully. The person who plays should be willing occasionally to be made use of. Are we not all made use of at times? Is not the good talker in perpetual request? The *raconteuse*—is she not begged to tell that story over and over again? Does not the wit find himself invited out to dinner to amuse the company? And are they not all, if amiable, glad to perform their part? Surely the pianist should be as amiable!

Reading aloud is one of the most common of Home Amusements, and one of the best. It is a pity, however, that our women, especially, do not cultivate elocution a little, so that they may read aloud intelligently. There is no prettier accomplishment. A lady at a watering-place, who can read a poem or story well, is always sur-

rounded. The sweet voice, the correct accent, the air of intelligence—all give the author a great help, and Longfellow never wrote a prettier stanza than this :

“ Then read from the favored volume  
The poem of thy choice,  
And lend to the rhyme of the poet  
The music of thy voice.”

But, when the favored volume and the poem have to be filtered through a nasal accent and an uneducated drawl, we feel that the poet has been vilified, and his gold and silver turns to dross. Every woman especially should remember the fable of the girl whose lips dropped pearls and diamonds, who was so much more agreeable as a friend and acquaintance than that other damsel whose lips dropped toads and vipers. The latter, evidently, had never taken lessons in elocution.

We have a certain national vice in pronunciation and in accent which we ought to correct. A moment's listening to the English accent will soon teach us to pronounce with a more melodious finish. We need not hug ourselves with any vainglorious national conceit. We do *not* speak as well as our English cousins.



## THE KITCHEN.

WE began at the garret, and we are now at the kitchen. So our readers may learn that we are on the home-stretch, and shall be through very soon. If we have wearied them, let them bear with us but a little longer, and then, on our faithful steed, whom they shall find at the kitchen door, they shall ride off and never be troubled with us any more.

A model kitchen is every housekeeper's delight. In these days of tiles and modern improvement, what pretty things kitchens are !

The modern dairy, with its upright milk-pans, in which the cream is marked off by a neat little thermometer ; the fire-brick floor ; the exquisite range, with its polished *batterie de cuisine* ; every brilliant brass saucepan, seeming to say, "Come and cook in me" ; every porcelain-lined pan urging upon one the necessity of stewing nectarines in white sugar ; every bright can suggesting the word "conserve," which always makes the mouth water ; every clatter of the skewers, saying, "Dainty dishes, dainty dishes, come and make me ! Come and make me !" All this is quite fascinating to an amateur.

No pretty woman—did she but know it—is ever half so pretty as when she is playing cook. The clean, white apron, the neat, short cambric dress, the little cap, the fair bare arms—does the reader remember Ruth Pinch and the beef-steak-pie ? A lady should make the desserts in summer

sometimes. Such ice-cream, such glorified Charlotte Russe, such cakes, such delicate apple-pies, such creams and jellies as fall from a lady's fingers—these are ambrosial food !

There is among certain women a great passion for the cleanly part of household work. The love of a dairy has grown to be a favorite task with many a duchess. In our country, where ladies are compelled to put a hand, perhaps once too often, to the household work, owing to the inefficiency of the servants, this is *not* ordinarily considered the most thoroughly amusing of Home Amusements. To cook a heavy dinner in warm weather, to wash dishes afterward—this is sober prose, and by a very dull author. But the poetry of house-work, the rose hue o'er our russet cares—this can be classed as a Home Amusement.

In the early morning we can imagine a lady going into her neat kitchen to prepare the desserts for the day, and finding it very agreeable. She will set her well-flavored custard away in the ice-chest with a serene knowledge of how good it will be at dinner, and place her compote of pears securely on a high shelf, away from that ubiquitous visitor the cat, who has in most families so remarkable and irrepressible an appetite. She can take a turn at the milk-pan, and skim off the cream herself if she pleases. It will be much thicker if she does. It is a not unpleasant duty to steal into the kitchen ten minutes before dinner, to see to it that the roast birds are garnished with water-cresses, that the vegetables are properly prepared, that the silver dishes are without a smear. All this sort of attention makes good servants, and very good dinners.

It is often one of the Home Amusements for a party of girls to try their hand at clear-starching. Statira, indeed, does not like this ; but they should learn to flute their own ruffles. Who knows but they may marry an army officer, and go to Nebraska ?

All sorts of fine washing and ironing, all sorts of doing

up of lace, of renovating old silks, etc., may be made into Home Amusements, if done cheerfully, and in the right spirit. The modern embroidery requiring pressing, the many modern accomplishments of lace-making, *appliqué*, etc., lead a young lady into the kitchen, and she can derive a vast deal of amusement from this room, if she chooses.

One of the holiest of duties is to learn how to cook for the sick. This requires a great deal of patient talent, and it is a sufficient reward if we can see the beloved convalescent tasting our arrowroot and sago, and good beef-tea and jelly, with approbation.

Among Home Amusements, how many reckon the jolly party assembled to make the wedding-cake? Susan and Sarah shall stone the raisins, Charlotte and Clara shall beat the eggs, Louisa shall slice the citron, Matilda, who has a judicial mind, shall weigh! Then all shall stir, and who shall be the one to get the ring?

The baking is momentous. Mamma had better be consulted here. And then the great question of the icing! Oh! how anxious! The mince-pies require another season of deep thought and much very stringent stirring. The excellent brandy, the dash of orange curaçoa, must be poured out by the lady, else why is it that ever after the mince-pie seems to lack that inspiring and hidden fire? We read that there is many a slip between the cup and the lip!

The modern elegant devices by which strawberries, violets, and orange-blossoms are candied in sugar, effect a Home Amusement for dainty-fingered girls; and since the establishment in Boston of a cooking club, at which each young lady is to contribute some article of her own cooking, we see signs of a revival in all branches of the great art of cookery which is most encouraging. It was a notable old maxim among Puritan mothers that every wife should

know how to make bread, and, perhaps, it has not died out yet.

Looking at the subject broadly, every thoroughly accomplished woman should know how to do everything, from making a soup up to a cup of tea—the Alpha and the Omega of cookery.

In the matter of flavoring, the colored race have us at a great disadvantage. Any old colored cook can distance her white “Missus” here. This highly-gifted race seem to have a sixth sense on the subject of flavors. The rich tropical nature breaks out in reminiscences of orange-blossoms, pineapple, guava, cocoanut, and Mandarin orange. Never can the descendants of the poor, half-starved, frozen exiles of Plymouth Rock hope to achieve such custards and puddings as these Ethiops turn out. And as to the juicyness of their fried oysters and their inimitable terrapin, who has ever approached them? It is as if a luxurious and tasteful, beneficent power had left us, when we were given what we proudly call a “higher intelligence.” Who would not exchange all the cold mathematical supremacy in which we glory for that luscious gift of making pies and puddings *à ravir*?

## THE FAMILY HORSE, AND OTHER PETS.

STANDING at the kitchen door, all ready for the most timorous to drive, is the most important minister to the Home Amusements—the family horse. He is a beast of burden, no doubt. There is but little Arab steed left in him, if, indeed, there ever was much. He is a plodder, a patient, much put-upon beast. The boys can harness him, the girls can drive him. He is allowed to take out grandma—when she consents to be driven, and isn't afraid of the railroad train, and does not think that it is going to rain. The baby, when he takes his first adventurous journey down the village street, is put in state and in blankets behind the family horse. No one is afraid of Blossom. No one likes to whip him, because if he were whipped, what antics he might give way to !

Blossom is an exceedingly inappropriate name. Dried Leaf would be far more descriptive. Still Blossom is adhered to, because the suggestion that he was once young, and that really he is frisky, in his silent way, is still a delightful legend in the family.

Blossom, who is an intelligent old beast, knows perfectly well how utterly weak and imbecile the whole family are about him. So he will never do anything but walk and trot very gently, because he knows that no one dares to whip him. Once a young cousin, who had none of the family reverence for Blossom, did give him a few cuts on

his exceedingly smooth, fat sides. Blossom had the presence of mind to stand up on his hind legs, frightening mamma nearly to death ; and she mentioned, in Blossom's hearing, that "he never was to be whipped again, because he really had a great deal of fire in him, and would not brook whip or spur !"

"I remember, dear," she says, "your father says that he heard, when he bought him, that he came of very proud stock."

It has been noticed that when papa wishes to catch the train Blossom can go as fast as anybody.

Blossom is a great pet, and he has that instinct of a good family horse—he stops when anything is wrong. Once, when the harness broke, Blossom, instead of running, stopped short, and saved the lives of the whole family. He has a quick ear for a coming railway train, and never has balked going up hill. The girls feed him with sugar, and take their first ride on his dear, safe, hard old back. The boys have had imaginary jousts with neighboring knights, urging him in the lists. He has been put through all the sports of the middle ages, has Blossom, and probably he distrusts the institution of chivalry. Still, he likes the boys, and does all that a phlegmatic temperament and an indomitable laziness will allow in the way of a spirited and impulsive charge.

There *are* persons whom Blossom dislikes ; one is the spinster sister, Miss Caroline, who drives him with many a whirrup, and "get up," and "g'lang," and has a nervous twitch to her hand, and a distrustful and uncertain temper with the whip. Miss Caroline nags Blossom, as she has nagged everything and everybody all her life, and Blossom resents her absence of repose and confidence by starting wildly to right and left as he goes down the village street, appearing to make for a distant fence when she is endeavoring to guide his nose toward the gate of the parsonage.



Indeed, the village wit says that if he sees only the back of the family carriage he can tell that Miss Caroline is driving, as he watches that respected vehicle describing parabolas and angles as it wobbles down the street.

When mamma drives, Blossom goes in a slow, stately, but dignified manner, and, although he imposes upon her good-nature, and does not put forth any mile-in-three-minutes style, yet he shows a due respect for himself and her. When the girls drive him, he, feeling through the reins a little of the ichor of their young blood, becomes almost vivacious, and goes almost half as fast as he can go. When papa drives, he feels a strong hand behind him, and actually gets there.

Every family should have as many animals as possible. Dogs of every breed and variety—especially big ones, and good ones, like mastiffs and Newfoundlands, and a few little ones to play with. Cats and kittens, if they like them, rabbits, goats, pigeons, lambs, peacocks, etc., and as much live-stock as can be accommodated about the place should be there. These four-footed friends, especially dogs, are indispensable in the country. What attachments one forms for them ! How dreary the hour when they die ! Perhaps, then, we wish that they had not been so intimate, so dear, so loving, so trustful. The walk, the ramble, the quiet seat on the piazza—all, all must be endeared by the silent friendship of the dogs.

There is sometimes a want of harmony among the pets. Carlo must be shut up while Flirt is at large, and the parrot must be kept away from the pigeons. The parrot can take care of herself as to the cats ; but how about the canaries and the blackcap ? Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and the only safety of slavery.

And yet these enforced duties : do they not fit the boys for the cares of government ? Do they not tell the future politician what he is to do ? Are they not, after all, a part

of that great education which Home, and only Home, can give us ?

We shall have few friends so faithful as Blossom, few who will impose upon us so gently, and who will really impose upon us to our advantage. We shall have few such friends as Carlo and Flirt, who love us, faults and all ; who never ask what wrong we have committed, or how unworthy we are, but who are, without doubt, the most flattering of worshipers, loving us simply because we are *ourselves*. How few love us for that, and that alone !

## IN CONCLUSION.

IN looking over our list of Home Amusements—the private theatricals, the tableaux vivants, the brain games, the fortune-telling, the making of screens, the painting of fans, etc.; the games at cards, the etching, the lawn tennis, the dancing, the garden party, the window gardens, the birds, the picnics, the plaque-painting, the archery, the parlor and the kitchen—we can only feel how much we have left out. Why have we not spoken more fully of the library, with its quiet and respectable arm-chairs, its green table, its shelves filled with those silent friends who never desert us, its paper-cutter, its wood-fire, its latest magazine, its quiet, and the heavy curtain dropped at evening? How did we happen to so slight this delightful room, wherein so many of the best amusements of home are always arranging themselves? Perhaps because the story told itself, and we did not need to tell it.

How could we have forgotten the quest for green apples and choke-cherries in the spring, or the subsequent repentance? the bird-snaring and nesting? and in summer the search for wild flowers? the attempts at making an herbarium? the berry-picking? the nutting in the fall? that cracking of butternuts by the winter fire? that arrangement of the autumn-leaves?

Simply because the record of Home Amusements is endless. It is almost all of life which is worth remembering.

But we can not leave the reader here, particularly if that kindly personage be a young lady, without congratulating her upon the age in which she exists. She finds vastly more to amuse her in her home-life than her mother or her grandmother did before her. They were content to receive once a month "The Lady's Book," with a few hints as to lace-work, worsted-work, patterns for the embroidering of slippers or sofa-cushions. A new suggestion for embroidery on white cambric, or, through a friend in some great mart of fashion, the cut pattern of an article of dress—think of that, ye who get the fashions by telegraph. Dress itself was a crude thing compared to what it is now. There was not even at Newport the slightest approximation to the luxury of to-day. A "London-made" habit, for instance, was almost unknown. There was no "riding to hounds," no skating rink, no casino; there were quiet dinners, and very many "Germans," but they were conducted inexpensively, at the hotels almost universally.

Of course, New York and Philadelphia, Boston and Washington, offered an exciting life to the prominent and fashionable women of the day for a few weeks of the season. But the long life at home of the rank and file, the severe winters, during whose rigors the ardent and ambitious and pleasure-loving were shut up for months behind four dreary walls, were not illumined by patterns of artistic fancy-work from South Kensington, or by the delightful knowledge of china painting. No ingenious boy or girl thought of cutting or carving in wood beyond the vulgar whittling, which all good housekeepers condemned. The elderly lady sat about with her knitting—very plain knitting at that. The crochet-needle had not then begun that endless chain which has since united our vast continent in a network of elaborate tidies, and covered our babies with delicate flannel Josies, or given us, for the head and neck, the softest of wraps. The sewing-machine had not begun its prodigious

march down our long seams. People did much "plain sewing," but knew not of artistic curtains made of cheese-cloth, or of unbleached muslin elaborated into Roman scarfs—a singular marriage, by the way, of Lowell and its looms with the Eternal City, all of which they know now.

Young ladies had not then been taught to draw and paint artistically, sincerely, as they are taught to-day. The education in music was infinitely less thorough. It was an age when the person who aspired to the accomplishments had much to contend against. There were but few rail-roads which penetrated to the remote villages ; and it must be confessed that life had its dull evenings.

But around the one astral lamp which then shed its uncertain rays upon the family circle there were the same elements of which human society is now composed, and there was one amusement present whose absence we now sometimes have to regret. We refer to that lost art of conversation which has, it would seem, departed from our busy last half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, it has left the whole world, if we can believe Cornelius O'Dowd, Mrs. Stowe, and Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, and even some French writers. Mrs. Stowe, in one of her books of early New England life, referring to the art of conversation, speaks feelingly of the change. Young ladies were driven by the very dullness of their lives to be readers of good books. There were many admirable historical scholars and Shakespeareans among the New England girls of a past generation. They read Milton and John Bunyan, and the early essayists and poets. Their novels had been written for them by Walter Scott and Miss Austen, and they were an education in themselves.

And conversation, such as we do not hear often, lighted up those long winter evenings. Perhaps, too, this very quiet and dullness was helping to forge the armor of some heroine who was to take her part in civilizing the West.

Certainly it made some great women. However, as we take account of what little we may have lost, we are very grateful for all we have gained. Our present civilization rubs out individuality, no doubt. Life is smothered in appliances.

What is called the higher education of women, and the very superior culture now possible, may not have yet made a race of good talkers, but it has undoubtedly made an army of thinkers.

It certainly has helped to fill the country with refined and happy girls, who have no reason to complain of repression. It would seem almost impossible to find now the repressed, morbid, undeveloped, and crushed natures which a gloomy religion and a lingering of Puritan prejudice made almost too common in early New England. Many of those women still live, and have found expression in literature to tell us how devoid their homes were of amusement.

The world is not filled with geniuses, or with those fortunate people who can evolve an amusing life from out of the depths of their inner consciousness. We may, therefore, be very grateful for every innocent amusement. Indeed, we may be very grateful that amateur concerts, little operettas, cantatas, musical clubs, are now common, and that the performers, young ladies of all ranks and classes, are admirably trained in music; that in decorative art industries they are no longer novices, but deserving of the higher name of artist.

All these better developments of the mind and power of each inmate can not but render home interesting, gay, cheerful, happy, blessed.

And all the Home Amusements should be made, or studied to be made, the amusements of the whole.

No pursuit or pleasure can be carried on in the best spirit without being in some measure unselfish if it conduces to the amusement of home. Thus the indulgence of



a favorite taste may have the beauty of philanthropy in it, if it is made to help along the cheerfulness of home.

There are some trades which are solitary and exclusive. Authorship is one of these ; and perhaps the author is not always a very amusing inmate. But the actor in the private play, the clever and ready wit who makes the charade lively, the musician, the embroideress, the fortune-teller, the good partner at whist, the clever amateur cook, and the artistic member—these can all add to Home Amusements.

THE END.

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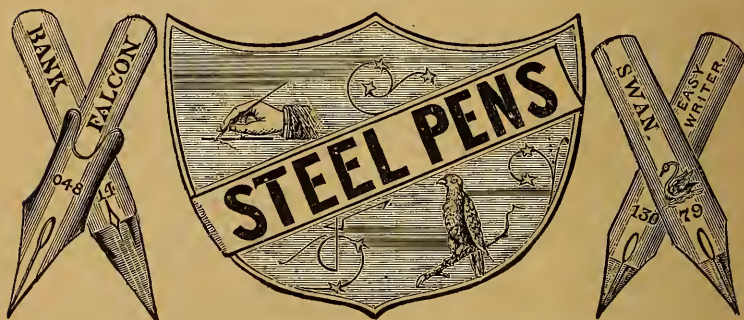
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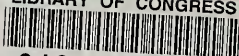








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